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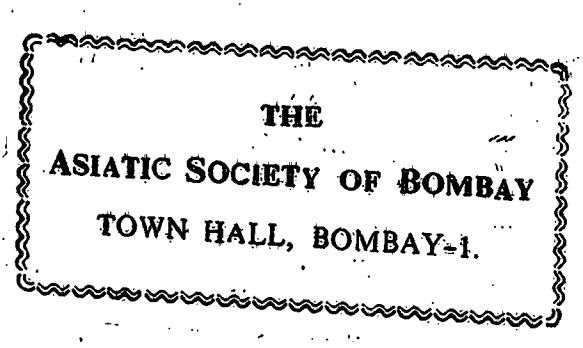

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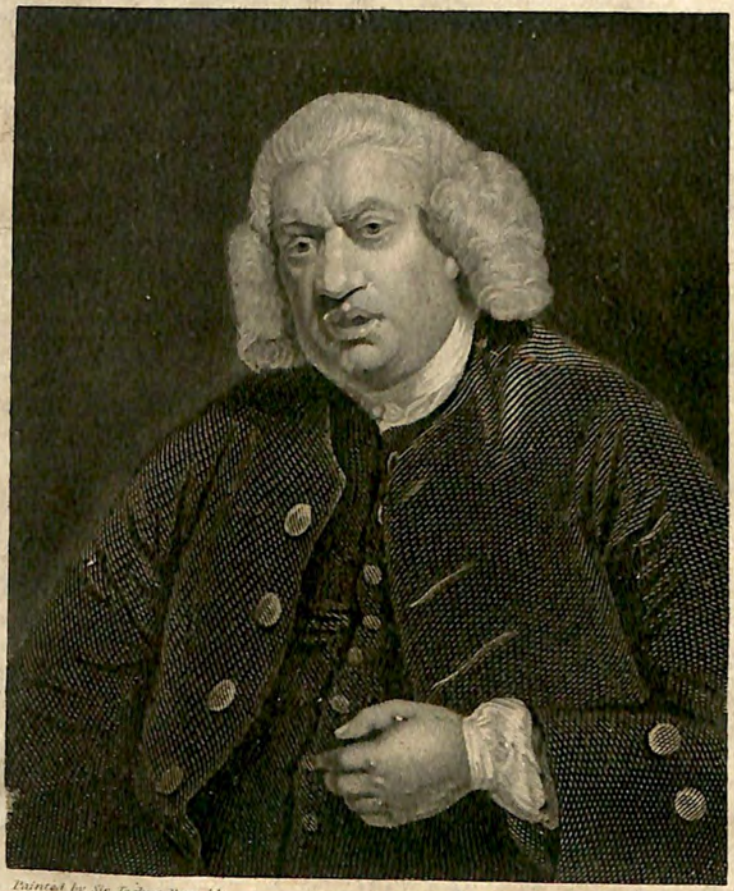


Painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. *Engraved by E. Finden.*

SAMUEL JOHNSON, L.L.D.

London, Published by John Murray, 1830.

THE LIFE

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

INCLUDING

A JOURNAL OF A TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES.

BY

JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

C3003 al

A NEW EDITION.

WITH

NUMEROUS ADDITIONS AND NOTES,

BY

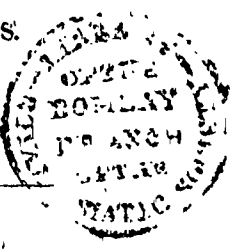
JOHN WILSON CROKER, LL.D. F.R.S.

——— Quò fit ut OMNIS
Votivâ pateat veluti descripta tabellâ
VITA SENIS——— HORAT. 1 Sat. lib. ii.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

XXC15



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ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS IN VOL. V.

Page 22,—l. 11, 16, and 18, *for* Lennox, *read*—Lowe; Mr. Lowe the painter.
— 22, note 2, ... *add*—see ante, vol. iii. p. 489, n. 2.
— 65,—line 26, . . . *on* love and madness, *add note*—[A kind of novel founded on the story of Mr. Hackman and Miss Ray, see vol. iv. p. 254.—ED.]
— 70, note 2, ... *add*—BOSWELL.
— 106, note, ... *add*—The text not here accurately quoted is in Ecclesiastes, c. xi. v. 3.
— 132,—line 19, . . . *on* Bellamy, *add note*—[An actress who published memoirs of her life.—ED.]
— 223, note 2, . . . *add*—Mr. Chalmers says that they were certainly chiefly collected by Stevens, and published by him in the St. James's Chronicle.
— 226, note, ... *after* ante, *insert*—vol. i. p. 160.
— 233, note, ... *add*—The following version, if less poetical, is at least more exact:

"*Six hours to sleep devote—to law the same;*
Pray four, feast two—the rest the muses claim."

— 243,—line 13, . . . *on* ancestor, *add note*—[This is absurd—Carleton himself was in one of James's sea fights long prior to the siege of Derry.]
— 265, note 1, . . . *between* and *and* appears, *insert*—the sentence.
— 286, note 1, . . . *for* 7th December, *read*—5th December.
— 316, note 2, . . . *add*—Bishop Sanderson is referred to, because he was an eminent casuist, and treated of cases of conscience.
— 349, note, ... *add*—Mr. Boswell may perhaps have meant "The Idler, No. 82," where Johnson added to Sir Joshua Reynolds's paper the words, "and *pollute* his canvas with deformity."

THE

LIFE

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

My correspondence with Dr. Johnson during the rest of this year was, I know not why, very scanty, and all on my side. I wrote him one letter to introduce Mr. Sinclair (now Sir John), the member for Caithness [1], to his acquaintance; and informed him in another that my wife had again been affected with alarming symptoms of illness [2]. [But his letters to other correspondents, and particularly to Mrs. Thrale, carry on the story of his life.] Ed.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER. Pearson MSS.

"London, 9th June, 1781.

"Dear madam,—I hope the summer makes you better. My disorders, which had come upon me again, have again given way to medicine; and I am a better sleeper than I have lately been.

"The death of dear Mr. Thrale has made my attendance upon his home necessary; but we have sold the trade, which we did not know how to manage, and have sold it for an hundred and thirty thousand pounds.

"My Lives are at last published, and you will receive them this week by the carrier. I have some hopes of coming this

[1] [The Right Honourable Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, bart.; a voluminous writer on agriculture and statistics.—Ed.]

[2] [This passage is transposed from the date, (January, 1782,) under which it stands in the original edition, to *this*, its more proper place.—Ed.]

summer amongst you for a short time. I shall be loath to miss you two years together. But in the mean time let me know how you do. I am, dear madam, your affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"Bolt-court, 16th June, 1781.

"DEAR SIR,—How welcome your account of yourself and your invitation to your new house was to me, I need not tell you, who consider our friendship not only as formed by choice, but as matured by time. We have been now long enough acquainted to have many images in common, and therefore to have a source of conversation which neither the learning nor the wit of a new companion can supply.

"My Lives are now published; and if you will tell me whither I shall send them, that they may come to you, I will take care that you shall not be without them.

"You will perhaps be glad to hear that Mrs. Thrale is disencumbered of her brewhouse; and that it seemed to the purchaser so far from an evil, that he was content to give for it an hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds. Is the nation ruined?

"Please to make my respectful compliments to Lady Rothes, and keep me in the memory of all the little dear family, particularly Mrs. Jane. I am, sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Johnson's charity to the poor was uniform and extensive, both from inclination and principle. He not only bestowed liberally out of his own purse, but what is more difficult as well as rare, would beg from others, when he had proper objects in view. This he did judiciously as well as humanely. Mr. Philip Metcalfe tells me, that when he has asked him for some money for persons in distress, and Mr. Metcalfe has offered what Johnson thought too much, he insisted on taking less, saying, "No, no, sir; we must not *pamper* them [1]."

Piozzi, p. 80. [With advising others to be charitable, however,

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 489.—ED.]

Dr. Johnson did not content himself. He gave away all he had, and all he ever had gotten, except the two thousand pounds he left behind; and the very small portion of his income which he spent on himself, with all our calculation, we never could make more than seventy or at most fourscore pounds a year, and he pretended to allow himself a hundred. He had numberless dependants out of doors as well as in, "who, as he expressed it, did not like to see him latterly unless he brought them money." For those people he used frequently to raise contributions on his richer friends; "and this," says he, "is one of the thousand reasons which ought to restrain a man from drony solitude and useless retirement."] Piozzi, p. 80.

I am indebted to Mr. Malone, one of Sir Joshua Reynolds's executors, for the following note, which was found among his papers after his death, and which, we may presume, his unaffected modesty prevented him from communicating to me with the other letters from Dr. Johnson with which he was pleased to furnish me. However slight in itself, as it does honour to that illustrious painter and most amiable man, I am happy to introduce it.

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"23d June, 1781.

"DEAR SIR,—It was not before yesterday that I received your splendid benefaction. To a hand so liberal in distributing, I hope nobody will envy the power of acquiring. I am, dear sir, your obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The following letters were written at this time by Johnson to Miss Reynolds, the latter, on receiving from her a copy of her "Essay on Taste," privately printed, but never published.

Reyn. MSS.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"25th June, 1781.

"DEAR MADAM,—You may give the book[1] to Mrs. Hornecк[2], and I will give you another for yourself.

"I am afraid there is no hope of Mrs. Thrale's custom for your pictures; but, if you please, I will mention it. She cannot make a pension out of her jointure[3].

"I will bring the papers myself. I am, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO MISS REYNOLDS[4].

"Bolt-court, 28th June, 1781.

"DEAREST MADAM,—There is in these [*pages, or remarks,*] such depth of penetration, such nicety of observation, as Locke or Pascal might be proud of. This I desire you to believe is my real opinion.

"However, it cannot be published in its present state. Many of your notions seem not to be very clear in your own mind; many are not sufficiently developed and expanded for the common reader: it wants every where to be made smoother and plainer.

"You may, by revisal and correction, make it a very elegant and a very curious work. I am, my dearest dear, your affectionate and obedient servant, "SAMUEL JOHNSON."

"TO THOMAS ASTLE, ESQ.

"17th July, 1781.

"SIR,—I am ashamed that you have been forced to call so often for your books, but it has been by no fault on either side. They have never been out of my hands, nor have I ever been at home without seeing you; for to see a man so skilful in the antiquities of my country is an opportunity of improvement not willingly to be missed.

[1] [Probably the *Beauties of Johnson*, published about this period: see *ante*, vol. i. p. 190.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 423.—ED.]

[3] [Miss Reynolds, it seems, wished to dispose of her collection, and thought that Mrs. Thrale might purchase and pay for it by an annuity.—ED.]

[4] The lady to whom this letter was addressed, and for whom Dr. Johnson had a high regard, died in Westminster, at the age of eighty, Nov. 1, 1807.—MALONE. [One Sunday evening, at the time he was first declining, Miss Reynolds sent to make inquiries. His answer was, "Tell her that I *cannot* be well, for she does *not* come to see me."—*Hawk. Mem.* vol. ii. p. 149.—ED.]

"Your notes on Alfred[1] appear to me very judicious and accurate, but they are too few. Many things familiar to you are unknown to me, and to most others; and you must not think too favourably of your readers: by supposing them knowing, you will leave them ignorant. Measure of land, and value of money, it is of great importance to state with care. Had the Saxons any gold coin?

"I have much curiosity after the manners and transactions of the middle ages, but have wanted either diligence or opportunity, or both. You, sir, have great opportunities, and I wish you both diligence and success. I am, sir, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The following curious anecdote I insert in Dr. Burney's own words. "Dr. Burney related to Dr. Johnson the partiality which his writings had excited in a friend of Dr. Burney's, the late Mr. Bewley[2], well known in Norfolk by the name of the *Philosopher of Massingham;* who, from the Ramblers and plan of his Dictionary, and long before the authour's fame was established by the Dictionary itself, or any other work, had conceived such a reverence for him, that he earnestly begged Dr. Burney to give him the cover of the first letter he had received from him, as a relick of so estimable a writer. This was in 1755. In 1760, when Dr. Burney visited Dr. Johnson at the Temple in London, where he had then chambers, he happened to arrive there before he was up; and being shown into the room where he was to breakfast, finding himself alone, he exa-

[1] The will of King Alfred, alluded to in this letter, from the original Saxon, in the library of Mr. Astle, has been printed at the expense of the University of Oxford.—BOSWELL.

[2] [He was a "*Monthly Reviewer*," and died in 1783. If the story of "the bristles of the hearth-broom," or any thing like it, be true, Mr. Bewley might better have been called an *idiot* than an *enthusiast;* but the editor takes the liberty of disbelieving the anecdote altogether. That Mr. Bewley might have wished and asked for Dr. Johnson's *autograph* is natural enough; but that, *after a lapse of five years*, he should have been satisfied with receiving instead of an autograph a few bristles of a broom is too absurd; and, that Dr. Burney should not have mentioned so strange a story to Dr. Johnson till after the further lapse of *twenty-five years* is quite incredible.—ED.]

mined the contents of the apartment, to try whether he could, undiscovered, steal any thing to send to his friend Bewley, as another relick of the admirable Dr. Johnson. But finding nothing better to his purpose, he cut some bristles off his hearth-broom, and enclosed them in a letter to his country enthusiast, who received them with due reverence. The doctor was so sensible of the honour done to him by a man of genius and science, to whom he was an utter stranger, that he said to Dr. Burney, 'Sir, there is no man possessed of the smallest portion of modesty, but must be flattered with the admiration of such a man. I'll give him a set of my Lives, if he will do me the honour to accept of them.' In this he kept his word; and Dr. Burney had not only the pleasure of gratifying his friend with a present more worthy of his acceptance than the segment from the hearth-broom, but soon after introducing him to Dr. Johnson himself in Bolt-court, with whom he had the satisfaction of conversing a considerable time, not a fortnight before his death; which happened in St. Martin's-street, during his visit to Dr. Burney, in the house where the great Sir Isaac Newton had lived and died before [1]."

In one of his little memorandum-books is the following minute:

"August 9, 3 P. M. ætat. 72, in the summer-house at Streatham.

"After innumerable resolutions formed and neglected, I have

[1] [This house (No. 36) is now occupied as a parish school-house, but the upper apartments have been but little altered since the days of their illustrious owner. There were lately published proposals for erecting on the site a monument to the memory of Sir Isaac; the *design* of which was a globe of brick and stones, covered with plaster of Paris, and marked with geographical and astronomical lines, and having a hollow centre large enough for a public lecture-room.—ED.].

retired hither, to plan a life of greater diligence, in hope that I may yet be useful, and be daily better prepared to appear before my Creator and my Judge, from whose infinite mercy I humbly call for assistance and support.

"My purpose is,

"To pass eight hours every day in some serious employment.

"Having prayed, I purpose to employ the next six weeks upon the Italian language for my settled study."

How venerably pious does he appear in these moments of solitude! and how spirited are his resolutions for the improvement of his mind, even in elegant literature, at a very advanced period of life, and when afflicted with many complaints!

In autumn he went to Oxford, Birmingham, Lichfield, and Ashbourne, for which very good reasons might be given in the conjectural[1] yet positive manner of writers, who are proud to account for every event which they relate. He himself, however, says, "The motives of my journey I hardly know: I omitted it last year, and am not willing to miss it again." But some good considerations arise, amongst which is the kindly recollection of Mr. Hector, surgeon, of Birmingham. "Hector is likewise an old friend, the only companion of my childhood that passed through the school with me. We have always loved one another: perhaps we may be made better by some serious conversation; of which, however, I have no distinct hope." Prayers & Med. p. 198.

He says, too, "At Lichfield, my native place, I hope to show a good example by frequent attendance on publick worship."

[1] [This observation, just enough in general, is here peculiarly ill-placed; for, besides the motives for the journey which Mr. Boswell has quoted from the Prayers and Meditations, we shall see, by a subsequent letter, that Mrs. Thrale's kindness had forced him to undertake this little tour for the benefit of his health and spirits.—ED.]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"Oxford, 17th October, 1781.

"On Monday evening arrived at the Angel inn at Oxford Mr. Johnson and Mr. Barber, without any sinister accident.

"I am here; but why am I here? on my way to Lichfield, where I believe Mrs. Aston will be glad to see me. We have known each other long, and, by consequence, are both old; and she is paralytick; and if I do not see her soon, I may see her no more in this world. To make a visit on such considerations is to go on a melancholy errand. But such is the course of life.

"This place is very empty, but there are more here whom I know than I could have expected. Young Burke[1] has just been with me, and I have dined to-day with Dr. Adams, who seems fond of me."

"Lichfield, 20th October, 1781.

"I wrote from Oxford, where I staid two days. On Thursday I went to Birmingham, and was told by Hector that I should not be well so soon as I expected; but that well I should be. Mrs. Careless took me under her care, and told me *when I had tea enough.* On Friday I came hither, and have escaped the post-chaises[2] all the way. Every body here is as kind as I expected; I think Lucy is kinder than ever."

"27th October, 1781.

"Poor Lucy's illness has left her very deaf, and, I think, very inarticulate. I can scarcely make her understand me, and she can hardly make me understand her. So here are merry doings. But she seems to like me better than she did. She eats very little, but does not fall away.

"Mrs. Cobb and Peter Garrick are as you left them. Garrick's legatees at this place are very angry that they receive nothing. Things are not quite right, though we are so far from London[3]."

[1] [Richard, the only son of Edmund Burke, at this period at Oxford. He died in 1794, æt. 36. His afflicted father has immortalised him in many pathetic passages of his later works, and particularly in his celebrated "Letter to a Noble Lord."—ED.]

[2] [He means *escaped* the *expense* of post-chaises by happening to find places in stage-coaches.—ED.]

[3] [Dr. Johnson always controverted the common-place observation of the superior purity and happiness of *country* life.—ED.]

"Ashbourne, 10th November, 1781.

"Yesterday I came to Ashbourne, and last night I had very little rest. Dr. Taylor lives on milk, and grows every day better, and is not wholly without hope. Every body inquires after you and Queeney; but whatever [Miss] Burney may think of the celerity of fame, the name of Evelina had never been heard at Lichfield till I brought it. I am afraid my dear townsmen will be mentioned in future days as the last part of this nation that was civilized[1]. But the days of darkness are soon to be at an end. The reading society ordered it to be procured this week."

"Ashbourne, 24th November, 1781.

"I shall leave this place about the beginning of next week, and shall leave every place as fast as I decently can, till I get back to you, whose kindness is one of my great comforts. I am not well, but have a mind every now and then to think myself better, and I now hope to be better under your care."

"Lichfield, 3d December, 1781.

"I am now come back to Lichfield, where I do not intend to stay long enough to receive another letter. I have little to do here but to take leave of Mrs. Aston. I hope not the last leave. But christians may with more confidence than Sophonisba

'Avremo tosto lungo lungo spazio
Per stare assieme, et sarà forfe eterno.'

"My time passed heavily at Ashbourne; yet I could not easily get away; though Taylor, I sincerely think, was glad to see me go. I have now learned the inconvenience of a winter campaign; but I hope home will make amends for all my foolish sufferings."

"Birmingham, 8th December, 1781.

"I am come to this place on my way to London and to Streatham. I hope to be in London on Tuesday or Wednesday, and at Streatham on Thursday, by your kind conveyance. I shall have nothing to relate either wonderful or delightful. But remember that you sent me away, and turned me out into the world, and you must take the chance of finding me better or worse. This you may know at present, that my affection for

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iii. pp. 351 and 352, where, in a better humour, he describes his townsmen as the most civilized people in England.—Ed.]

you is not diminished; and my expectation from you is increased. Do not neglect me nor relinquish me. Nobody will ever love you better or honour you more than, madam, yours, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

In 1782 his complaints increased, and the history of his life this year is little more than a mournful recital of the variations of his illness, in the midst of which, however, it will appear from his letters that the powers of his mind were in no degree impaired.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"5th January, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I sit down to answer your letter on the same day in which I received it, and am pleased that my first letter of the year is to you. No man ought to be at ease while he knows himself in the wrong; and I have not satisfied myself with my long silence. The letter relating to Mr. Sinclair, however, was, I believe, never brought.

"My health has been tottering this last year; and I can give no very laudable account of my time. I am always hoping to do better than I have ever hitherto done.

"My journey to Ashbourne and Staffordshire was not pleasant; for what enjoyment has a sick man visiting the sick? Shall we ever have another frolick like our journey to the Hebrides?

"I hope that dear Mrs. Boswell will surmount her complaints: in losing her you will lose your anchor, and be tossed, without stability, by the waves of life[1]. I wish both you and her very many years, and very happy.

"For some months past I have been so withdrawn from the world, that I can send you nothing particular. All your friends, however, are well, and will be glad of your return to London. I am, dear sir, yours most affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."

At a time when he was less able than he had once been to sustain a shock, he was suddenly deprived of Mr. Levett, which event he thus communicated to Dr. Lawrence.

[1] The truth of this has been proved by sad experience.—BOSWELL. Mrs. Boswell died June 4, 1789.—MALONE.

"17th January, 1782.

"Sir,—Our old friend, Mr. Levett, who was last night eminently cheerful, died this morning. The man who lay in the same room, hearing an uncommon noise, got up and tried to make him speak, but without effect. He then called Mr. Holder, the apothecary, who, though when he came he thought him dead, opened a vein, but could draw no blood. So has ended the long life of a very useful and very blameless man. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "Sam. Johnson."

In one of his memorandum-books in my possession is the following entry:

"January 20, Sunday, Robert Levett was buried in the churchyard of Bridewell, between one and two in the afternoon. He died on Thursday, 17, about seven in the morning, by an instantaneous death. He was an old and faithful friend: I have known him from about 46[1]. *Commendavi*[2]. May God have mercy on him! May he have mercy on me!"

Such was Johnson's affectionate regard for Levett[3], that he honoured his memory with the following pathetic verses:

"Condemn'd to Hope's delusive mine,
As on we toil from day to day,
By sudden blast or slow decline
Our social comforts drop away.

"Well try'd through many a varying year,
See Levett to the grave descend;
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.

"Yet still he fills affection's eye,
Obscurely wise and coarsely kind;
Nor, letter'd arrogance[4], deny
Thy praise to merit unrefined.

---

[1] [No doubt the *year* 1746, and not the *age* of either party.—Ed.]

[2] [He, by this word, means that he had in prayer *recommended* his departed friend to the mercy of God. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 219.—Ed.]

[3] See an account of him in "The Gentleman's Magazine," February, 1785. —Boswell.

[4] In both editions of Sir John Hawkins's "Life of Dr. Johnson," "letter'd *ignorance*," is printed.—Boswell.

"When fainting Nature call'd for aid,
And hovering death prepared the blow,
His vigorous remedy display'd
The power of art without the show.

"In misery's darkest caverns known,
His ready help was ever nigh,
Where hopeless anguish pour'd his groan,
And lonely want retired to die [1].

"No summons mock'd by chill delay,
No petty gains disdain'd by pride:
The modest wants of every day
The toil of every day supply'd.

"His virtues walk'd their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure the eternal Master found
His single talent [2] well employ'd.

"The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
His frame was firm, his powers were bright,
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

"Then, with no throbs of fiery pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And freed his soul the nearest way [3]."

"TO MRS. STRAHAN.

"4th February, 1782.

"DEAR MADAM,—Mrs. Williams showed me your kind letter. This little habitation is now but a melancholy place, clouded with the gloom of disease and death. Of the four inmates, one has been suddenly snatched away; two are oppressed by very afflictive and dangerous illness; and I tried yesterday to gain some relief by a third bleeding from a disorder which has for some time distressed me, and I think myself to-day much better.

"I am glad, dear madam, to hear that you are so far recovered as to go to Bath. Let me once more entreat you to stay till your health is not only obtained, but confirmed. Your fortune is such as that no moderate expense deserves your care; and you have a husband who, I believe, does not regard it.

[1] Johnson repeated this line to me thus:

"And labour steals an hour to die."

But he afterwards altered it to the present reading.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Is there a pun hidden under this allusion to the parable in Matthew xxv. 15?—ED.]

[3] [Here, by an error of date, followed some observations on a curious passage in one of Johnson's diaries, which is removed in its proper place, March, 1782, *post*, p. 24.—ED.]

Stay, therefore, till you are quite well. I am, for my part, very much deserted; but complaint is useless. I hope God will bless you, and I desire you to form the same wish for me. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO EDMUND MALONE, ESQ.

"27th February, 1782.

"SIR,—I have for many weeks been so much out of order, that I have gone out only in a coach to Mrs. Thrale's, where I can use all the freedom that sickness requires. Do not, therefore, take it amiss, that I am not with you and Dr. Farmer. I hope hereafter to see you often. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO EDMUND MALONE, ESQ.

"2d March, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I hope I grow better, and shall soon be able to enjoy the kindness of my friends. I think this wild adherence to Chatterton [1] more unaccountable than the obstinate defence of Ossian. In Ossian there is a national pride, which may be forgiven, though it cannot be applauded. In Chatterton there is nothing but the resolution to say again what has once been said. I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

These short letters show the regard which Dr. Johnson entertained for Mr. Malone, who the more

[1] This note was in answer to one which accompanied one of the earliest pamphlets on the subject of Chatterton's forgery, entitled "Cursory Observations on the Poems attributed to Thomas Rowley," &c. Mr. Thomas Warton's very able "Inquiry" appeared about three months afterwards; and Mr. Tyrwhitt's admirable "Vindication of his Appendix," in the summer of the same year, left the believers in this daring imposture nothing but "the resolution to say again what had been said before." Daring, however, as this fiction was, and wild as was the adherence to Chatterton, both were greatly exceeded in 1795 and the following year, by a still more audacious imposture, and the pertinacity of one of its adherents, who has immortalized his name by publishing a bulky volume, of which the direct and manifest object was, to prove the authenticity of certain papers attributed to Shakspeare, after the fabricator of the spurious trash had publickly acknowledged the imposture.—MALONE. [Mr. Malone alludes to the forgery, by Mr. William Henry Ireland, of the Shakspearian papers which were exhibited with a ridiculous mixture of pomp and mystery at his father's house in Norfolk-street. It seems scarcely conceivable how such palpable impositions could have deceived the most ignorant, and yet there were numerous dupes in the critical and literary circles of the day. Mr. W. H. Ireland has since published a full and minute confession of the whole progress of his forgery; but, with a curious obstinacy, he, in this work, vehemently accuses of blindness, ignorance, and bad faith all those who detected what he confesses to have been an imposture, and is equally lavish in praise of the discernment and judgment of those whom he proves to have been dupes.—ED.]

he is known is the more highly valued. It is much to be regretted that Johnson was prevented from sharing the elegant hospitality of that gentleman's table, at which he would in every respect have been fully gratified. Mr. Malone, who has so ably succeeded him as an editor of Shakspeare, has, in his Preface, done great and just honour to Johnson's memory.

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"London, 2d March, 1782.

"DEAR MADAM,—I went away from Lichfield ill, and have had a troublesome time with my breath. For some weeks I have been disordered by a cold, of which I could not get the violence abated till I had been let blood three times. I have not, however, been so bad but that I could have written, and am sorry that I neglected it.

"My dwelling is but melancholy. Both Williams, and Desmoulins, and myself, are very sickly; Frank is not well; and poor Levett died in his bed the other day by a sudden stroke. I suppose not one minute passed between health and death. So uncertain are human things.

"Such is the appearance of the world about me; I hope your scenes are more cheerful. But whatever befalls us, though it is wise to be serious, it is useless and foolish, and perhaps sinful, to be gloomy. Let us, therefore, keep ourselves as easy as we can; though the loss of friends will be felt, and poor Levett had been a faithful adherent for thirty years.

"Forgive me, my dear love, the omission of writing; I hope to mend that and my other faults. Let me have your prayers.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Cobb, and Miss Adey, and Mr. Pearson, and the whole company of my friends. I am, my dear, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 19th March, 1782.

"DEAR MADAM,—My last was but a dull letter, and I know not that this will be much more cheerful: I am, however, willing to write, because you are desirous to hear from me.

"My disorder has now begun its ninth week, for it is not yet over. I was last Thursday blooded for the fourth time, and have since found myself much relieved, but I am very tender

and easily hurt; so that since we parted I have had but little comfort. But I hope that the spring will recover me, and that in the summer I shall see Lichfield again, for I will not delay my visit another year to the end of autumn.

"I have, by advertising, found poor Mr. Levett's brothers, in Yorkshire, who will take the little he has left: it is but little, yet it will be welcome, for I believe they are of very low condition.

"To be sick, and to see nothing but sickness and death, is but a gloomy state: but I hope better times, even in this world, will come, and whatever this world may withhold or give, we shall be happy in a better state. Pray for me, my dear Lucy.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Cobb, and Miss Adey, and my old friend, Hetty Bailey, and to all the Lichfield ladies. I am, dear madam, yours, affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."

On the day on which this letter was written, he thus feelingly mentions his respected friend and physician, Dr. Lawrence:—"Poor Lawrence has almost lost the sense of hearing; and I have lost the conversation of a learned, intelligent, and communicative companion, and a friend whom long familiarity has much endeared. Lawrence is one of the best men whom I have known.—*Nostrum omnium miserere Deus.*" Pr. & Med. p. 203.

[Dr. Lawrence had long been his friend and confidant. A conversation Mrs. Thrale saw them hold together in Essex-street one day in the year 1781 or 1782 was a singular and melancholy one. Dr. Johnson was exceedingly ill, and she accompanied him thither for advice. The physician was, however, in some respects, more to be pitied than the patient: Johnson was panting under an asthma and dropsy; but Lawrence had been brought home that very morning struck with the palsy, from which he had, two hours before they came, strove to awaken himself by blisters: they were both deaf, and scarce able to speak besides; one from difficulty of breathing, the other from paralytic debility. To give and re- Piozzi, p. 57, 58.

Piozzi, p. 57,59.

ceive medical counsel, therefore, they fairly sat down on each side a table in the doctor's gloomy apartment, adorned with skeletons[1], preserved monsters, and agreed to write Latin billets to each other. "Such a scene, &c." exclaims Mrs. Thrale, "did I never see." "You," said Johnson, are "*timidè* and *gelidè*;" finding that his friend had prescribed palliative not drastic remedies. "It is not *me*," replies poor Lawrence, in an interrupted voice; "'tis nature that is *gelidè* and *timidè*." In fact he lived but few months after, and retained his faculties still a shorter time. He was a man of strict piety and profound learning, but little skilled in the knowledge of life or manners, and died without ever having enjoyed the reputation he so justly deserved.

Dr. Johnson's health had, indeed, been always extremely bad ever since Mrs. Thrale first knew him, and his over-anxious care to retain without blemish the perfect sanity of his mind, contributed much to disturb it. He had studied medicine diligently in all its branches; but had given particular attention to the diseases of the imagination, which he watched in himself with a solicitude destructive of his own peace, and intolerable to those he trusted. Dr. Lawrence told him one day, that if he would come and beat him once a week he would bear it; but to hear his complaint was more than *man* could support.]

It was Dr. Johnson's custom, when he wrote to Dr. Lawrence concerning his own health, to use the Latin language. I have been favoured by Miss Lawrence with one of these letters as a specimen:

"T. LAWRENCIO, MEDICO S.

"Maiis Calendis, 1782.

"Novum frigus, nova tussis, nova spirandi difficultas, novam

[1] [Mr. Malone, in his MS. notes, says, that this description is *ideal*, as Dr. Lawrence had no skeletons or monsters in his room.—Ed.]

sanguinis missionem suadent, quam tamen te inconsulto nolim fieri. Ad te venire vix possum, nec est cur ad me venias. Licere vel non licere uno verbo dicendum est; cætera mihi et Holdero[1] reliqueris. Si per te licet, imperatur nuncio Holderum ad me deducere.

"Postquàm tu discesseris quò me vertam[2]?"

"TO CAPTAIN LANGTON[3], IN ROCHESTER.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 20th March, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—It is now long since we saw one another; and, whatever has been the reason, neither you have written to me, nor I to you. To let friendship die away by negligence and silence, is certainly not wise. It is voluntarily to throw away one of the greatest comforts of this weary pilgrimage, of which when

[1] Mr. Holder, in the Strand, Dr. Johnson's apothecary.

[2] [*TO DR. T. LAWRENCE.*

"*May*, 1782.

"*Fresh cold, renewed cough, and an increased difficulty of breathing; all suggest a further letting of blood, which, however, I do not choose to have done without your advice. I cannot well come to you, or is there any occasion for you coming to me. You may say, in one word, yes or no, and leave the rest to Holder and me. If you consent, pray tell the messenger to bring Holder to me.*

"*When you shall be gone whither shall I turn myself?*"—ED.]

Soon after the above letter, Dr. Lawrence left London, but not before the palsy had made so great a progress as to render him unable to write for himself. The following are extracts from letters addressed by Dr. Johnson to one of his daughters:

"You will easily believe with what gladness I read that you had heard once again that voice to which we have all so often delighted to attend. May you often hear it. If we had his mind, and his tongue, we could spare the rest.

"I am not vigorous, but much better than when dear Dr. Lawrence held my pulse the last time. Be so kind as to let me know, from one little interval to another, the state of his body. I am pleased that he remembers me, and hope that it never can be possible for me to forget him. July 22d, 1782.

"I am much delighted even with the small advances which dear Dr. Lawrence makes towards recovery. If we could have again but his mind, and his tongue in his mind, and his right hand, we should not much lament the rest. I should not despair of helping the swelled hand by electricity, if it were frequently and diligently supplied.

"Let me know from time to time whatever happens; and I hope I need not tell you how much I am interested in every change. Aug. 26, 1782.

"Though the account with which you favoured me in your last letter could not give me the pleasure that I wished, yet I was glad to receive it; for my affection to my dear friend makes me desirous of knowing his state, whatever it be. I beg, therefore, that you continue to let me know, from time to time, all that you observe.

"Many fits of severe illness have, for about three months past, forced my kind physician often upon my mind. I am now better; and hope gratitude, as well as distress, can be a motive to remembrance. Bolt-court, Fleet-street, February 4, 1783."—BOSWELL.

[3] Mr. Langton being at this time on duty at Rochester, he is addressed by his military title.—BOSWELL.

it is, as it must be taken finally away, he that travels on alone will wonder how his esteem could be so little. Do not forget me; you see that I do not forget you. It is pleasing in the silence of solitude to think, that there is one at least, however distant, of whose benevolence there is little doubt, and whom there is yet hope of seeing again.

"Of my life, from the time we parted, the history is mournful. The spring of last year deprived me of Thrale, a man whose eye for fifteen years had scarcely been turned upon me but with respect or tenderness; for such another friend, the general course of human things will not suffer man to hope. I passed the summer at Streatham, but there was no Thrale; and having idled away the summer with a weakly body and neglected mind, I made a journey to Staffordshire on the edge of winter. The season was dreary, I was sickly, and found the friends sickly whom I went to see. After a sorrowful sojourn, I returned to a habitation possessed for the present by two sick women, where my dear old friend, Mr. Levett, to whom, as he used to tell me, I owe your acquaintance, died a few weeks ago, suddenly in his bed; there passed not, I believe, a minute between health and death. At night, at Mrs. Thrale's, as I was musing[1] in my chamber, I thought with uncommon earnestness, that, however I might alter my mode of life, or whithersoever I might remove, I would endeavour to retain Levett about me: in the morning my servant brought me word that Levett was called to another state, a state for which, I think, he was not unprepared, for he was very useful to the poor. How much soever I valued him, I now wish that I had valued him more[2].

"I have myself been ill more than eight weeks of a disorder, from which, at the expense of about fifty ounces of blood, I hope I am now recovering."

"You, dear sir, have, I hope, a more cheerful scene; you see George fond of his book, and the pretty misses airy and lively, with my own little Jenny equal to the best: and in whatever can contribute to your quiet or pleasure, you have Lady Rothes ready to concur. May whatever you enjoy of

[1] [In former editions these words are arranged "at night, as at Mrs. Thrale's, I was musing."—ED.]

[2] Johnson has here expressed a sentiment similar to that contained in one of Shenstone's stanzas, to which, in his life of that poet, he has given high praise:

"I prized every hour that went by,
Beyond all that had pleased me before;
But now they are gone and I sigh,
And I grieve that I prized them no more."—J. BOSWELL.

good be increased, and whatever you suffer of evil be diminished. I am, dear sir, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. HECTOR, IN BIRMINGHAM[1].

"London, 21st March, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I hope I do not very grossly flatter myself to imagine that you and dear Mrs. Careless[2] will be glad to hear some account of me. I performed the journey to London with very little inconvenience, and came safe to my habitation, where I found nothing but ill health, and, of consequence, very little cheerfulness. I then went to visit a little way into the country, where I got a complaint by a cold which has hung eight weeks upon me, and from which I am, at the expense of fifty ounces of blood, not yet free. I am afraid I must once more owe my recovery to warm weather, which seems to make no advances towards us.

"Such is my health, which will, I hope, soon grow better. In other respects I have no reason to complain. I know not that I have written any thing more generally commended than the *Lives of the Poets;* and have found the world willing enough to caress me, if my health had invited me to be in much company; but this season I have been almost wholly employed in nursing myself.

"When summer comes I hope to see you again, and will not put off my visit to the end of the year. I have lived so long in London, that I did not remember the difference of seasons.

"Your health, when I saw you, was much improved. You will be prudent enough not to put it in danger. I hope, when we meet again, we shall congratulate each other upon fair prospects of longer life; though what are the pleasures of the longest life, when placed in comparison with a happy death? I am, dear sir, yours most affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"Without a date, but supposed to be about this time.

"DEAR SIR,—That you and dear Mrs. Careless should have care or curiosity about my health gives me that pleasure which every man feels from finding himself not forgotten. In age we feel again that love of our native place and our early friends,

[1] A part of this letter having been torn off, I have, from the evident meaning, supplied a few words and half words at the ends and beginning of lines.—BOSWELL.

[2] [See vol. iii. p. 347.—ED.]

which, in the bustle or amusements of middle life, were overborne and suspended. You and I should now naturally cling to one another: we have outlived most of those who could pretend to rival us in each other's kindness. In our walk through life we have dropped our companions, and are now to pick up such as chance may offer us, or to travel on alone. You, indeed, have a sister, with whom you can divide the day: I have no natural friend left; but Providence has been pleased to preserve me from neglect; I have not wanted such alleviations of life as friendship could supply. My health has been, from my twentieth year, such as had seldom afforded me a single day of ease; but it is at least not worse; and I sometimes make myself believe that it is better. My disorders are, however, still sufficiently oppressive.

"I think of seeing Staffordshire again this autumn, and intend to find my way through Birmingham, where I hope to see you and dear Mrs. Careless well. I am, sir, your affectionate friend, "SAM. JOHNSON."

[For the latter half of this month of March he kept the following diary.]

Pr. and Med. p. 200.

"March 18.—Having been, from the middle of January, distressed by a cold, which made my respiration very laborious, and from which I was but little relieved by being blooded three times; having tried to ease the oppression of my breast by frequent opiates, which kept me waking in the night and drowsy the next day, and subjected me to the tyranny of vain imaginations; having to all this added frequent catharticks, sometimes with mercury, I at last persuaded Dr. Lawrence, on Thursday, March 14, to let me bleed more copiously. Sixteen ounces were taken away, and from that time my breath has been free, and my breast easy. On that day I took little food, and no flesh. On Thursday night I slept with great tranquillity. On the next night (15) I took diacodium, and had a most restless night. Of the next day I remember nothing, but that I rose in the afternoon, and saw Mrs. Lennox and Sheward [1].

"Sunday 17.—I lay late, and had only palfrey to dinner. I read part of Waller's Directory, a pious rational book; but in any except a very regular life difficult to practise.

"It occurred to me, that though my time might pass unem-

[1] [Mr. W. Seward.—ED.]

ployed, no more should pass uncounted, and this has been written to-day, in consequence of that thought. I read a Greek chapter, prayed with Francis, which I now do commonly, and explained to him the Lord's Prayer, in which I find connexion not observed, I think, by the expositors. I made punch for myself and my servants, by which, in the night, I thought both my breast and imagination disordered. Prayers & Med. p. 200.

"March 18.—I rose late, looked a little into books. Saw Miss Reynolds and Miss Thrale, and Nicolaida[1]; afterwards Dr. Hunter[2] came for his catalogue. I then dined on tea, &c.; then read over part of Dr. Lawrence's book 'De Temperamentis,' which seems to have been written with a troubled mind.

"My mind has been for some time much disturbed. The peace of God be with me.

"I hope to-morrow to finish Lawrence, and to write to Mrs. Aston, and to Lucy.

"19.—I rose late. I was visited by Mrs. Thrale, Mr. Cotton, and Mr. Crofts[3]. I took Lawrence's paper in hand, but was chill; having fasted yesterday, I was hungry, and dined freely, then slept a little, and drank tea; then took candles, and wrote to Aston and Lucy; then went on with Lawrence, of which little remains. I prayed with Francis.

"Mens sedatior, laus Deo.

"To-morrow Shaw[4] comes. I think to finish Lawrence, and write to Langton.

"Poor Lawrence has almost lost the sense of hearing; and I have lost the conversation of a learned, intelligent, and communicative companion, and a friend whom long familiarity has much endeared. Lawrence is one of the best men whom I have known.

"Nostrum omnium miserere Deus.

"20.—Shaw came; I finished reading Lawrence. I dined liberally. Wrote a long letter to Langton, and designed to read, but was hindered by Strahan. *The ministry is dissolved. I prayed with Francis, and gave thanks.*

"To-morrow—To Mrs. Thrale—To write to Hector—To Dr. Taylor.

[1] [A learned Greek; a friend of Mr. Langton.—ED.]

[2] [The catalogue referred to was probably that of the ancient coins in Dr. Hunter's museum, which was published in the ensuing year, with a classical dedication to the queen, which perhaps Dr. Johnson revised.—ED.]

[3] [Probably Mr. Herbert Croft, who had supplied him with a life of Young. See *sub* 24th Dec. 1783.—ED.]

[4] [Probably the editor of the Gaelick Dictionary, who about this period was warmly engaged in the Ossian controversy, and as he took Dr. Johnson's part, probably received some assistance from him.—ED.]

Prayers & Med. p. 200.

"21.—I went to Mrs. Thrale. Mr. Cox and Paradise met me at the door, and went with me in the coach. Paradise's Loss[1]. In the evening wrote to Hector. At night there were eleven visitants. Conversation with Mr. Cox. When I waked I saw the penthouses covered with snow.

"22.—I spent the time idly. Mens turbata. In the afternoon it snowed. At night I wrote to Taylor about the pot, and to Hamilton about the Fœdera[2].

"23.—I came home, and found that Desmoulins had, while I was away, been in bed. Letters from Langton and Boswell. I promised L[ennox] six guineas.

"24.—Sunday. I rose not early. Visitors, Allen, Davis, Windham, Dr. Horsley. Dinner at Strahan's. Came home and chatted with Williams, and read Romans ix. in Greek.

"To-morrow begin again to read the Bible; put rooms in order; copy L[ennox's] letter. At night I read 11 p. and something more, of the Bible, in fifty-five minutes.

"26.—Tuesday. I copied L[ennox's] letter. Then wrote to Mrs. Thrale. Cox visited me. I sent home Dr. Lawrence's papers, with notes. I gave [Mrs.] D[esmoulins] a guinea, and found her a gown.

"27.—Wednesday. At Harley-street. Bad nights—in the evening Dr. Bromfield and his family—Merlin's steelyard given me.

"28.—Thursday. I came home. Sold Rymer for Davies; wrote to Boswell. Visitors, Dr. Percy, Mr. Crofts. I have, in ten days, written to [Mrs.] Aston, Lucy, Hector, Langton, Boswell; perhaps to all by whom my letters are desired.

"The weather, which now begins to be warm, gives me great help. I have hardly been at church this year; certainly not since the 15th of January. My cough and difficulty of breath would not permit it.

"This is the day on which, in 1752, dear Tetty died. I have now uttered a prayer of repentance and contrition; perhaps Tetty knows that I prayed for her. Perhaps Tetty is now praying for me. God help me. Thou, God, art merciful, hear my prayers, and enable me to trust in Thee.

[1] [This probably refers to some property in Virginia which Mr. Paradise possessed in right of his wife, and which had been confiscated. See *Jefferson's Letters*, where he advocates Paradise's claims as being a whig and friend to American independence.—Ed.]

[2] [A set of Rymer which he was charitably endeavouring to sell for Davis, probably to Mr. Gerard Hamilton; and this was, perhaps, the occasion which made Mr. Hamilton say that he once asked him for 50*l.* for a charitable purpose.—Ed.]

"We were married almost seventeen years, and have now been parted thirty. Prayers & Med. p. 200.

"I then read 11 p. from Ex. 36. to Lev. 7. I prayed with Fr. and used the prayer for Good Friday.

"29.—Good Friday. After a night of great disturbance and solicitude, such as I do not remember, I rose, drank tea, but without eating, and went to church. I was very composed, and coming home, read Hammond on one of the Psalms for the day. I then read Leviticus. Scott[1] came in. A kind letter from [Mrs.] Gastrel. I read on, then went to evening prayers, and afterwards drank tea, with buns; then read till I finished Leviticus 24 pages et sup.

"To write to [Mrs.] Gastrel[2] to-morrow.

"To look again into Hammond.

"30.—Saturday. Visitors, Paradise, and I think Horsley. Read 11 pages of the Bible. I was faint; dined on herrings and potatoes. At prayers, I think, in the evening. I wrote to [Mrs.] Gastrel; and received a kind letter from Hector. At night Lowe. Pr[ayed] with Francis.

"31.—Easter-Day. Read 15 pages of the Bible. Cætera alibi."

* * * * * *

On the foregoing curious passage—"Mar.[3] 20. The ministry is dissolved. I prayed with Francis, and gave thanks"—it has been the subject of discussion whether there are two distinct particulars mentioned here? Or that we are to understand the giving of thanks to be in consequence of the dissolution of the ministry? In support of the last of these conjectures may be urged his mean opinion of that ministry, which has frequently appeared in the course of this work; and it is strongly confirmed by what he said on the subject to Mr. Seward:—"I am glad the ministry is removed[4]. Such a bunch of imbecility never disgraced a country. If they sent a

[1] [Lord Stowell.—Ed.]

[2] [Mrs. Gastrell, of Lichfield.—Ed.]

[3] [Mr. Boswell had erroneously dated this extract *Jan.*, and had so placed it. Mr. Boswell does not appear to have seen the whole diary.—Ed.]

[4] On the preceding day the ministry had been changed.—Malone.

messenger into the city to take up a printer, the messenger was taken up instead of the printer, and committed by the sitting alderman. If they sent one army to the relief of another, the first army was defeated and taken before the second arrived. I will not say that what they did was always wrong; but it was always done at a wrong time."

I wrote to him at different dates; regretted that I could not come to London this spring, but hoped we should meet somewhere in the summer; mentioned the state of my affairs, and suggested hopes of some preferment; informed him, that as "The Beauties of Johnson" had been published in London, some obscure scribbler had published at Edinburgh what he called "The Deformities of Johnson."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 28th March, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—The pleasure which we used to receive from each other on Good-Friday and Easter-day, we must be this year content to miss. Let us, however, pray for each other, and I hope to see one another yet from time to time with mutual delight. My disorder has been a cold, which impeded the organs of respiration, and kept me many weeks in a state of great uneasiness; but by repeated phlebotomy it is now relieved: and next to the recovery of Mrs. Boswell, I flatter myself, that you will rejoice at mine.

"What we shall do in the summer, it is yet too early to consider. You want to know what you shall do now; I do not think this time of bustle and confusion[1] like to produce any advantage to you. Every man has those to reward and gratify who have contributed to his advancement. To come hither with such expectations at the expense of borrowed money, which I find you know not where to borrow, can hardly be considered prudent. I am sorry to find, what your solicitations seem to imply, that you have already gone the whole length of your credit. This is to set the quiet of your whole life at hazard. If you anticipate your inheritance, you can at last inherit nothing; all that you receive must pay for the past. You

must get a place, or pine in penury, with the empty name of a great estate. Poverty, my dear friend, is so great an evil, and pregnant with so much temptation, and so much misery, that I cannot but earnestly enjoin you to avoid it. Live on what you have; live if you can on less; do not borrow either for vanity or pleasure; the vanity will end in shame, and the pleasure in regret: stay therefore at home, till you have saved money for your journey hither.

"*The Beauties of Johnson* are said to have got money to the collector; if the *Deformities* have the same success, I shall be still a more extensive benefactor.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, who is I hope reconciled to me; and to the young people whom I never have offended.

"You never told me the success of your plea against the solicitors. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. GASTRELL AND MRS. ASTON. Pemb. MSS.

"London, Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 30th March, 1782.

"DEAREST LADIES,—The tenderness expressed in your kind letter makes me think it necessary to tell you that they who are pleased to wish me well, need not be any longer particularly solicitous about me. I prevailed on my physician to bleed me very copiously, almost against his inclination. However, he kept his finger on the pulse of the other hand, and, finding that I bore it well, let the vein run on. From that time I have mended, and hope I am now well. I went yesterday to church without inconvenience, and hope to go tomorrow.

"Here are great changes in the great world; but I cannot tell you more than you will find in the papers. The men have got in whom I have endeavoured to keep out; but I hope they will do better than their predecessors: it will not be easy to do worse.

"Spring seems now to approach, and I feel its benefit, which I hope will extend to dear Mrs. Aston.

"When Dr. Falconer saw me, I was at home only by accident, for I lived much with Mrs. Thrale, and had all the care from her that she could take or could be taken. But I have never been ill enough to want attendance; my disorder has been rather tedious than violent; rather irksome than painful. He needed not have made such a tragical representation.

"I am now well enough to flatter myself with some hope of pleasure from the summer. How happy would it be if we could see one another, and be all tolerably well.

"Let us pray for one another. I am, dearest ladies, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Reyn. MSS.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"8th April, 1782.

"DEAREST MADAM,—Your work[1] is full of very penetrating meditation, and very forcible sentiments. I read it with a full perception of the sublime, with wonder and terrour; but I cannot think of any profit from it; it seems not born to be popular.

"Your system of the mental fabrick is exceedingly obscure, and, without more attention than will be willingly bestowed, is unintelligible. The plans of Burnaby will be more safely understood, and are often charming. I was delighted with the different bounty of different ages.

"I would make it produce something if I could, but I have indeed no hope. If a bookseller would buy it at all, as it must be published without a name, he would give nothing for it worth your acceptance. I am, my dearest dear, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Letters, vol. ii. p. 237.

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"[26th] April, [1782].

"I have been very much out of order since you sent me away; but why should I tell you, who do not care, nor desire to know, I dined with Mr. Paradise on Monday, with the Bishop of St. Asaph yesterday, with the Bishop of Chester I dine to-day, and with the academy on Saturday, with Mr. Hoole on Monday, and with Mrs. Garrick on Thursday, the 2d of May, and then—what care you?—*what then?*

"The news run that we have taken seventeen French transports; that Langton's lady is lying down with her eighth child, all alive; and Mrs. Carter's Miss Sharpe is going to marry a schoolmaster sixty-two years old."

p. 238.

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"30th April, 1782.

"I have had a fresh cold, and been very poorly. But I was yesterday at Mr. Hoole's, where were Miss Reynolds and many others. I am going to the club.

[1] [Probably the "*Essay on Taste*," already mentioned, *ante*, p. 3.—ED.]

"Since Mrs. Garrick's invitation I have a letter from Miss Moore[1], to engage me for the evening. I have an appointment to Miss Monkton, and another with Lady Sheffield[2] at Mrs. Way's[3]. Letters, vol. ii. p. 238.

"Two days ago Mr. Cumberland had his third night[4], which, after all expenses, put into his own pocket five pounds. He has lost his plume.

"Mrs. S———[5] refused to sing, at the Duchess of Devonshire's request, a song to the Prince of Wales. They pay for the ———[6] neither principal nor interest; and poor Garrick's funeral expenses are yet unpaid, though the undertaker is broken. Could you have a better purveyor for a little scandal? But I wish I was at Streatham."]

Notwithstanding his afflicted state of body and mind this year, the following correspondence affords a proof not only of his benevolence and conscientious readiness to relieve a good man from errour, but by his clothing one of the sentiments in his "Rambler," in different language, not inferior to that of the original, shows his extraordinary command of clear and forcible expression.

A clergyman at Bath wrote to him, that in "The Morning Chronicle," a passage in "The Beauties of Johnson," article Death, had been pointed out, as supposed by some readers to recommend suicide, the words being "To die is the fate of man; but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly;" and respectfully suggesting to him, that such an erroneous notion of any sentence in the writings of an acknowledged friend of religion and virtue should not pass uncontradicted.

[1] [Miss Hannah More.—Ed.]

[2] [The first wife of the first Lord Sheffield.—Ed.]

[3] [Wife of Daniel Way, Esq. of the Exchequer Office, of whom there is so copious an account in Nicholls's continuation of Bowyer's Anecdotes.—Ed.]

[4] [The play of the *Walloons*, acted about this time; but the *third* night was the 2d of May.—Ed.]

[5] [Sheridan.—Ed.]

[6] [Theatre, Drury-lane, sold by Garrick to Sheridan.—Ed.]

Johnson thus answered this clergyman's letter:

"TO THE REVEREND MR. ———, AT BATH.

"15th May, 1782.

"SIR,—Being now in the country in a state of recovery, as I hope, from a very oppressive disorder, I cannot neglect the acknowledgment of your Christian letter. The book called 'The Beauties of Johnson' is the production of I know not whom; I never saw it but by casual inspection, and considered myself as utterly disengaged from its consequences. Of the passage you mention, I remember some notice in some paper; but knowing that it must be misrepresented, I thought of it no more, nor do I know where to find it in my own books. I am accustomed to think little of newspapers; but an opinion so weighty and serious as yours has determined me to do, what I should without your seasonable admonition have omitted: and I will direct my thought to be shown in its true state[1]. If I could find the passage I would direct you to it. I suppose the tenour is this:—'Acute diseases are the immediate and inevitable strokes of Heaven; but of them the pain is short, and the conclusion speedy; chronical disorders, by which we are suspended in tedious torture between life and death, are commonly the effect of our own misconduct and intemperance. To die, &c.'—This, sir, you see is all true and all blameless. I hope some time in the next week to have all rectified. My health has been lately much shaken; if you favour me with any answer, it will be a comfort to me to know that I have your prayers. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

This letter, as might be expected, had its full effect, and the clergyman acknowledged it in grateful and pious terms[2].

[1] What follows appeared in the Morning Chronicle of May 29, 1782.—"A correspondent having mentioned in the Morning Chronicle of December 12, the last clause of the following paragraph, as seeming to favour suicide; we are requested to print the whole passage, that its true meaning may appear, which is not to recommend suicide but exercise. Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which we are decreed; but while the soul and body continue united, it can make the association pleasing, and give probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diseases are from Heaven, and chronical from ourselves; the dart of death, indeed, falls from Heaven, but we poison it by our own misconduct: to die is the fate of man; but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly."—BOSWELL.

[2] The correspondence may be seen at length in the Gentleman's Magazine, Feb. 1786.—BOSWELL.

The following letters require no extracts from mine to introduce them.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 3d June, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—The earnestness and tenderness of your letter is such, that I cannot think myself showing it more respect than it claims, by sitting down to answer it the day on which I received it.

"This year has afflicted me with a very irksome and severe disorder. My respiration has been much impeded, and much blood has been taken away. I am now harassed by a catarrhous cough, from which my purpose is to seek relief by change of air; and I am, therefore, preparing to go to Oxford.

"Whether I did right in dissuading you from coming to London this spring, I will not determine. You have not lost much by missing my company; I have scarcely been well for a single week. I might have received comfort from your kindness; but you would have seen me afflicted, and, perhaps, found me peevish. Whatever might have been your pleasure or mine, I know not how I could have honestly advised you to come hither with borrowed money. Do not accustom yourself to consider debt only as an inconvenience; you will find it a calamity. Poverty takes away so many means of doing good, and produces so much inability to resist evil, both natural and moral, that it is by all virtuous means to be avoided. Consider a man whose fortune is very narrow; whatever be his rank by birth, or whatever his reputation by intellectual excellence, what can he do? or what evil can he prevent? That he cannot help the needy is evident; he has nothing to spare. But, perhaps, his advice or admonition may be useful. His poverty will destroy his influence; many more can find that he is poor, than that he is wise; and few will reverence the understanding that is of so little advantage to its owner. I say nothing of the personal wretchedness of a debtor, which, however, has passed into a proverb. Of riches it is not necessary to write the praise. Let it, however, be remembered, that he who has money to spare, has it always in his power to benefit others; and of such power a good man must always be desirous.

"I am pleased with your account of Easter[1]. We shall meet,

[1] Which I celebrated in the Church of England chapel at Edinburgh, founded by Lord Chief Baron Smith, of respectable and pious memory.—BOSWELL.

I hope, in autumn, both well and both cheerful; and part each the better for the other's company.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, and to the young charmers. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

Letters, vol. ii. p. 241.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 4th June, 1782.

"Wisely was it said by him who said it first, that this world is all ups and downs. You know, dearest lady, that when I pressed your hand at parting, I was rather down. When I came hither, I ate my dinner well, but was so harassed by the cough, that Mr. Strahan said, it was an extremity which he could not have believed 'without the sensible and true avouch' of his own observation. I was indeed almost sinking under it, when Mrs. Williams happened to cry out that such a cough should be stilled by opium or any means. I took yesterday half an ounce of bark, and knew not whether opium would counteract it, but remembering no prohibition in the medical books, and knowing that to quiet the cough with opium was one of Lawrence's last orders, I took two grains, which gave me not sleep indeed, but rest, and that rest has given me strength and courage.

"This morning to my bed-side came dear Sir Richard [Jebb]. I told him of the opium, and he approved it, and told me, if I went to Oxford, which he rather advised, that I should strengthen the constitution by the bark, tame the cough with opium, keep the body open, and support myself by liberal nutriment.

"As to the journey I know not that it will be necessary—*desine mollium tandem querularum.*"

"Sunday, 8th June[1], 1782.

"I have this day taken a passage to Oxford for Monday—not to frisk, as you express it with very unfeeling irony, but to catch at the hopes of better health. The change of place may do something. To leave the house where so much has been suffered affords some pleasure."

"Oxford, 12th June, 1782.

p. 243. "I find no particular salubrity in this air; my respiration is very laborious; my appetite is good, and my sleep commonly long and quiet; but a very little motion disables me.

"I dine to-day with Dr. Adams, and to-morrow with Dr. Wetherel[2]. Yesterday Dr. Edwards[3] invited some men from

[1] [Mrs. Piozzi had misdated this letter 8th July, and consequently misplaced it.—ED.]

[2] [Master of University College. See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 232.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 234.—ED.]

Exeter college, whom I liked very well. These variations of company help the mind, though they cannot do much for the body. But the body receives some help from a cheerful mind." Letters, vol. ii. p. 243.

"Oxford, 17th June, 1782. p. 249.

"Oxford has done, I think, what for the present it can do, and I am going slyly to take a place in the coach for Wednesday, and you or my sweet *Queeney* will fetch me on Thursday, and see what you can make of me.

"To-day I am going to dine with Dr. Wheeler, and to-morrow Dr. Edwards has invited Miss Adams and Miss More. Yesterday I went with Dr. Edwards to his living. He has really done all that he could do for my relief or entertainment, and really drives me away by doing too much."]

"TO MR. PERKINS.

"28th July, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I am much pleased that you are going a very long journey, which may by proper conduct restore your health and prolong your life.

"Observe these rules:

"1. Turn all care out of your head as soon as you mount the chaise.

"2. Do not think about frugality; your health is worth more than it can cost.

"3. Do not continue any day's journey to fatigue.

"4. Take now and then a day's rest.

"5. Get a smart sea-sickness, if you can.

"6. Cast away all anxiety, and keep your mind easy.

"This last direction is the principal; with an unquiet mind, neither exercise, nor diet, nor physick, can be of much use.

"I wish you, dear sir, a prosperous journey, and a happy recovery. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate, humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"24th August, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—Being uncertain whether I should have any call this autumn into the country, I did not immediately answer your kind letter. I have no call; but if you desire to meet me at Ashbourne, I believe I can come thither; if you had rather come to London, I can stay at Streatham: take your choice.

"This year has been very heavy. From the middle of January to the middle of June, I was battered by one disorder

after another! I am now very much recovered, and hope still to be better. What happiness it is that Mrs. Boswell has escaped.

"My *Lives* are reprinting; and I have forgotten the authour of Gray's character[1]: write immediately, and it may be perhaps yet inserted.

"Of London or Ashbourne you have your free choice; at any place I shall be glad to see you. I am, dear sir, yours, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

On the 30th August, I informed him that my honoured father had died that morning; a complaint under which he had long laboured, having suddenly come to a crisis, while I was upon a visit at the seat of Sir Charles Preston, from whence I had hastened the day before, upon receiving a letter by express.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 7th Sept. 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I have struggled through this year with so much infirmity of body, and such strong impressions of the fragility of life, that death, whenever it appears, fills me with melancholy; and I cannot hear without emotion of the removal of any one, whom I have known, into another state.

"Your father's death had every circumstance that could enable you to bear it; it was at a mature age, and it was expected; and as his general life had been pious, his thoughts had doubtless for many years past been turned upon eternity. That you did not find him sensible must doubtless grieve you; his disposition towards you was undoubtedly that of a kind, though not of a fond father. Kindness, at least actual, is in our power, but fondness is not; and if by negligence or imprudence you had extinguished his fondness, he could not at will rekindle it. Nothing then remained between you but mutual forgiveness of each other's faults, and mutual desire of each other's happiness.

"I shall long to know his final disposition of his fortune.

"You, dear sir, have now a new station, and have therefore new cares, and new employments. Life, as Cowley seems to say, ought to resemble a well-ordered poem; of which one rule generally received is, that the exordium should be simple, and

[1] The Rev. Mr. Temple, vicar of St. Gluvias, Cornwall.—BOSWELL.

should promise little. Begin your new course of life with the least show, and the least expense possible: you may at pleasure increase both, but you cannot easily diminish them. Do not think your estate your own, while any man can call upon you for money which you cannot pay: therefore, begin with timorous parsimony. Let it be your first care not to be in any man's debt.

"When the thoughts are extended to a future state, the present life seems hardly worthy of all those principles of conduct and maxims of prudence which one generation of men has transmitted to another; but upon a closer view, when it is perceived how much evil is produced and how much good is impeded by embarrassment and distress, and how little room the expedients of poverty leave for the exercise of virtue, it grows manifest that the boundless importance of the next life enforces some attention to the interests of this.

"Be kind to the old servants, and secure the kindness of the agents and factors. Do not disgust them by asperity, or unwelcome gaiety, or apparent suspicion. From them you must learn the real state of your affairs, the characters of your tenants, and the value of your lands.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell. I think her expectations from air and exercise are the best that she can form. I hope she will live long and happily.

"I forgot whether I told you that Rasay has been here. We dined cheerfully together. I entertained lately a young gentleman from Corrichatachin.

"I received your letters only this morning. I am, dear sir, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

In answer to my next letter, I received one from him, dissuading me from hastening to him as I had proposed. What is proper for publication is the following paragraph, equally just and tender:

"One expense, however, I would not have you to spare: let nothing be omitted that can preserve Mrs. Boswell, though it should be necessary to transplant her for a time into a softer climate. She is the prop and stay of your life. How much must your children suffer by losing her!"

My wife was now so much convinced of his sin-

cere friendship for me, and regard for her, that without any suggestion on my part, she wrote him a very polite and grateful letter.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. BOSWELL.

"London, 7th September, 1782.

"DEAR LADY,—I have not often received so much pleasure as from your invitation to Auchinleck. The journey thither and back is, indeed, too great for the latter part of the year; but if my health were fully recovered, I would suffer no little heat and cold, nor a wet or a rough road, to keep me from you. I am, indeed, not without hope of seeing Auchinleck again; but to make it a pleasant place I must see its lady well, and brisk, and airy. For my sake, therefore, among many greater reasons, take care, dear madam, of your health, spare no expense, and want no attendance that can procure ease or preserve it. Be very careful to keep your mind quiet; and do not think it too much to give an account of your recovery to, madam, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

Piozzi, p. 109.

[In the autumn of this year he accompanied Mrs. Thrale to Brighthelmstone, where, having got a little French print of some people skating, with these lines written under—

"Sur un mince chrystal l'hyver conduit leurs pas:
Le précipice est sous la glace.
Telle est de nos plaisirs la légère surface:
Glissez, mortels; n'appuyez pas—"

she begged translations from every body. Dr. Johnson gave her this:

"O'er ice the rapid skaiter flies,
With sport above and death below:
Where mischief lurks in gay disguise,
Thus lightly touch and quickly go."]

[The following letters[1] prove how constant and zealous was his friendship for Mr. Lowe.

[1] [Communicated by J. H. Markland, esq.—ED.]

"TO MR. LOWE. MS.

"22d October, 1782.

"SIR,—I congratulate you on the good that has befallen you. I always told you that it would come. I would not, however, have you flatter yourself too soon with punctuality. You must not expect the other half year at Christmas. You may use the money as your needs require; but save what you can.

"You must undoubtedly write a letter of thanks to your benefactor in your own name. I have put something on the other side. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO LORD SOUTHWELL. MS.

"MY LORD,—The allowance which you are pleased to make me, I received on the by Mr. Paget. Of the joy which it brought your lordship cannot judge, because you cannot imagine my distress. It was long since I had known a morning without solicitude for noon, or lain down at night without foreseeing with terror the distresses of the morning. My debts were small but many; my creditors were poor, and therefore troublesome. Of this misery your lordship's bounty has given me an intermission. May your lordship live long to do much good, and to do for many what you have done for, my lord, your lordship's, &c. "M. LOWE."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 7th December, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—Having passed almost this whole year in a succession of disorders, I went in October to Brighthelmstone, whither I came in a state of so much weakness, that I rested four times in walking between the inn and the lodging. By physick and abstinence I grew better, and am now reasonably easy, though at a great distance from health. I am afraid, however, that health begins, after seventy, and long before, to have a meaning different from that which it had at thirty. But it is culpable to murmur at the established order of the creation, as it is vain to oppose it. He that lives must grow old; and he that would rather grow old than die has God to thank for the infirmities of old age.

"At your long silence I am rather angry. You do not, since now you are the head of your house, think it worth your while to try whether you or your friend can live longer without writing; nor suspect, after so many years of friendship,

that when I do not write to you I forget you. Put all such useless jealousies out of your head, and disdain to regulate your own practice by the practice of another, or by any other principle than the desire of doing right.

"Your economy, I suppose, begins now to be settled; your expenses are adjusted to your revenue, and all your people in their proper places. Resolve not to be poor. Whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness: it certainly destroys liberty; and it makes some virtues impracticable, and others extremely difficult.

"Let me know the history of your life since your accession to your estate;—how many houses, how many cows, how much land in your own hand, and what bargains you make with your tenants.

* * * * * *

"Of my 'Lives of the Poets' they have printed a new edition in octavo, I hear, of three thousand. Did I give a set to Lord Hailes? If I did not, I will do it out of these. What did you make of all your copy?

"Mrs. Thrale and the three misses are now, for the winter, in Argyll-street. Sir Joshua Reynolds has been out of order, but is well again; and I am, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 20th Dec. 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I was made happy by your kind letter, which gave us the agreeable hopes of seeing you in Scotland again.

"I am much flattered by the concern you are pleased to take in my recovery. I am better, and hope to have it in my power to convince you by my attention, of how much consequence I esteem your health to the world and to myself. I remain, sir, with grateful respect, your obliged and obedient servant,

"MARGARET BOSWELL."

The death of Mr. Thrale had made a very material alteration with respect to Johnson's reception in that family. The manly authority of the husband no longer curbed the lively exuberance of the lady; and as her vanity had been fully gratified, by having the Colossus of Literature attached to her for many years, she gradually became less assiduous to please

him. Whether her attachment to him was already divided by another object, I am unable to ascertain; but it is plain that Johnson's penetration was alive to her neglect or forced attention; for on the 6th of October this year we find him making a "parting use of the library" at Streatham, and pronouncing a prayer which he composed on leaving Mr. Thrale's family.

"Almighty God, Father of all mercy, help me by thy grace, that I may, with humble and sincere thankfulness, remember the comforts and conveniences which I have enjoyed at this place; and that I may resign them with holy submission, equally trusting in thy protection when thou givest and when thou takest away. Have mercy upon me, O Lord! have mercy upon me! Prayers & Med. p. 214.

"To thy fatherly protection, O Lord, I commend this family. Bless, guide, and defend them, that they may so pass through this world, as finally to enjoy in thy presence everlasting happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

One cannot read this prayer without some emotions not very favourable to the lady whose conduct occasioned it[1].

The next day, October 7, he made the following memorandum:

"7th October. Prayers & Med. p. 212.

"I was called early. I packed up my bundles, and used the foregoing prayer, with my morning devotions somewhat, I think, enlarged. Being earlier than the family, I read St. Paul's farewell in the Acts, and then read fortuitously in the Gospels, which was my parting use of the library."

And in one of his memorandum-books I find, "Sunday, went to church at Streatham. *Templo valedixi cum osculo.*"

[1] [Mr. Boswell's dislike of Mrs. Thrale has led him here into a series of blunders and misrepresentations. Dr. Johnson meant nothing of what Mr. Boswell attributes to him—he makes a *parting use of the library*—makes a *valediction* to the *church*, and pronounces a prayer on quitting "*a place* where he had enjoyed so much comfort," *not* because Mrs. Thrale made him less welcome there, but because *she*, and *he with her*, were leaving Streatham We shall see by and by, that when Mr. Boswell came to town, *six months after this*, he found his friend domiciliated in Mrs. Thrale's new residence in Argyll-street.—Ed.]

He met Mr. Philip Metcalfe often at Sir Joshua Reynolds's and other places, and was a good deal with him at Brighthelmstone this autumn, being pleased at once with his excellent table and animated conversation. Mr. Metcalfe showed him great respect, and sent him a note that he might have the use of his carriage whenever he pleased. Johnson (3d October, 1782) returned this polite answer: "Mr. Johnson is very much obliged by the kind offer of the carriage, but he has no desire of using Mr. Metcalfe's carriage, except when he can have the pleasure of Mr. Metcalfe's company." Mr. Metcalfe could not but be highly pleased that his company was thus valued by Johnson, and he frequently attended him in airings. They also went together to Chichester, and they visited Petworth, and Cowdry, the venerable seat of the Lords Montacute[1]. "Sir," said Johnson, "I should like to stay here four-and-twenty hours. We see here how our ancestors lived."

That his curiosity was still unabated appears from two letters to Mr. John Nichols, of the 10th and 20th of October this year. In one he says, "I have looked into your 'Anecdotes,' and you will hardly thank a lover of literary history for telling you that he has been much informed and gratified. I wish

[1] This venerable mansion has since [Sept. 1793] been totally destroyed by fire.—MALONE. [There is a popular superstition that this inheritance is *accursed*, for having been part of the plunder of the church at the *Dissolution*; and some lamentable accidents have given countenance to the vulgar prejudice. When the Editor visited the ruins of Cowdray twenty years ago, he was reminded (in addition to older stories) that the *curse of fire and water* had recently fallen on Cowdray; its noble owner, Viscount Montague, the last male of his ancient race, having been drowned in the Rhine at Schaffausen, within a few days of the destruction of Cowdray: and the good folks of the neighbourhood did not scruple to prophesy that it would turn out a fatal inheritance. At that period the present possessor, Mr. Poyntz, who had married Lord Montague's sister and heiress, had two sons, who seemed destined to inherit Cowdray; but, on the 7th July, 1815, these young gentlemen boating off Bognor with their father on a very fine day, the boat was unaccountably upset, and the two youths perished; and thus were once more fulfilled the forebodings of superstition. See some curious observations on the subject of the fatality attending the inheritance of confiscated church property in Sir Henry Spelman's Treatise on the "History and Fall of Sacrilege."—ED.]

you would add your own discoveries and intelligence to those of Dr. Rawlinson [1], and undertake the Supplement to Wood. Think of it." In the other, "I wish, sir, you could obtain some fuller information of Jortin [2], Markland [3], and Thirlby [4]. They were three contemporaries of great eminence."

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"Brighthelmstone, 14th Nov. 1782.

"DEAR SIR,—I heard yesterday of your late disorder, and should think ill of myself if I had heard of it without alarm. I heard likewise of your recovery, which I sincerely wish to be complete and permanent. Your country has been in danger of losing one of its brightest ornaments, and I of losing one of my oldest and kindest friends; but I hope you will still live long, for the honour of the nation; and that more enjoyment of your elegance, your intelligence, and your benevolence is still reserved for, dear sir, your most affectionate, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The Reverend Mr. Wilson [5] having dedicated to

[1] [Dr. Richard Rawlinson, an eminent antiquary, and a great benefactor to the University of Oxford. He founded the Anglo-Saxon professorship there, and bequeathed to it all his collection of MSS., medals, antiquities, and curiosities, and amongst them large collections for a supplement to Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, to which Dr. Johnson refers. He died in 1754, æt. 65.—ED.]

[2] [Dr. John Jortin, a voluminous and respectable writer on general subjects, as well as an eminent divine. He died in August, 1770, Archdeacon of London and Vicar of Kensington; where his piety and charity, greater even than his great learning and talents, are still remembered. His laconic epitaph in Kensington churchyard, dictated by himself, contains a new turn of that thought which must be common to all epitaphs,—"Johannes Jortin mortalis esse desiit, A.S. 1770, æt. 72." *John Jortin ceased to be mortal*, &c.—ED.]

[3] [Jeremiah Markland was an eminent critic, particularly in Greek literature; but the shyness of his disposition and the almost ascetic seclusion of his long life limited at once his utility and his fame.—See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 377. He died in 1776, æt. 83.—ED.]

[4] [Styan Thirlby; a critic of at least as much reputation as he deserves. He studied successively divinity, medicine, and law. He seems to have been of a temper at once perverse and indolent, and to have dimmed and disgraced his talents by habits of intoxication. He complains, in a strain of self-satisfaction, that "when a man (meaning himself) thus towers by intellectual exaltation above his cotemporaries, he is represented as *drunken*, or *lazy*, or *capricious*." He died in 1753, æt. 61.—ED.]

[5] [A just and concise character of Mr. Wilson is given by Dr. Whitaker in the dedication of a plate, in the History of Whalley. "Viro Reverendo Thomæ Wilson STB ecclesiæ de Clitheroe, ministro—sodali jucundissimo—ἀρχαιολόγῳ insigni—felici juvenum institutori." Mr. Wilson died in 1813, aged sixty-seven.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

him his "Archæological Dictionary," that mark of respect was thus acknowledged:

"TO THE REVEREND MR. WILSON,
CLITHEROE, LANCASHIRE.

"31st December, 1782.

"REVEREND SIR,—That I have long omitted to return you thanks for the honour conferred upon me by your dedication, I entreat you with great earnestness not to consider as more faulty than it is. A very importunate and oppressive disorder has for some time debarred me from the pleasures and obstructed me in the duties of life. The esteem and kindness of wise and good men is one of the last pleasures which I can be content to lose; and gratitude to those from whom this pleasure is received is a duty of which I hope never to be reproached with the final neglect. I therefore now return you thanks for the notice which I have received from you, and which I consider as giving to my name not only more bulk, but more weight; not only as extending its superficies, but as increasing its value. Your book was evidently wanted, and will, I hope, find its way into the school; to which, however, I do not mean to confine it; for no man has so much skill in ancient rites and practices as not to want it. As I suppose myself to owe part of your kindness to my excellent friend, Dr. Patten[1], he has likewise a just claim to my acknowledg-

[1] [A letter from Dr. Patten[2], and Dr. Johnson's answer, have appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*: the latter is subjoined.—ED.]

DR. JOHNSON'S ANSWER.

"24th September, 1781.

"DEAR SIR,—It is so long since we passed any time together, that you may be allowed to have forgotten some part of my character; and I know not upon what other supposition I can pass without censure or complaint the ceremony of your address. Let me not trifle time in words, to which while we speak or write them we assign little meaning. Whenever you favour me with a letter, treat me as one that is glad of your kindness and proud of your esteem.

"The papers which have been sent for my perusal I am ready to inspect, if you judge my inspection necessary or useful: but, indeed, I do not; for what advantage can arise from it? A dictionary consists of independent parts, and therefore one page is not much a specimen of the rest. It does not occur to me that I can give any assistance to the authour, and for my own interest I resign it into your hands, and do not suppose that I shall ever see my name with regret where you shall think it proper to be put.

"I think it, however, my duty to inform a writer who intends me so great an honour, that in my opinion he would have consulted his interest by dedicating his work to some powerful and popular neighbour, who can give him more than

[2] [Dr. Thomas Patten had been a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, A. M. 1736, D.D. 1754. He was afterwards Rector of Childry, Berks, where he died 28th February, 1790.—ED.]

ment, which I hope you, sir, will transmit. There will soon appear a new edition of my Poetical Biography: if you will accept of a copy to keep me in your mind, be pleased to let me know how it may be conveniently conveyed to you. This present is small, but it is given with good-will by, reverend sir, your most, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

In 1783 he was more severely afflicted than ever, as will appear in the course of his correspondence; but still the same ardour for literature, the same constant piety, the same kindness for his friends, and the same vivacity, both in conversation and writing, distinguished him.

[In the early part of the year, however, his health had improved considerably, as appears from the following letter:

"10th Feb. 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—It was not insensibility of your kindness, I hope, that made me negligent of answering your letter, for which I now return you thanks, and which I consider as a fresh proof of your regard.

a name. What will the world do but look on and laugh when one scholar dedicates to another?

"If I had been consulted about this Lexicon of Antiquities while it was yet only a design, I should have recommended rather a division of Hebrew, Greek, and Roman particulars into three volumes, than a combination in one. The Hebrew part, at least, I would have wished to separate, as it might be a very popular book, of which the use might be extended from men of learning down to the English reader, and which might become a concomitant to the Family Bible.

"When works of a multifarious and extensive kind are undertaken in the country, the necessary books are not always known. I remember a very learned and ingenious clergyman[1], of whom, when he had published notes upon the Psalms, I inquired what was his opinion of Hammond's Commentary, and was answered, that he had never heard of it. As this gentleman has the opportunity of consulting you, it needs not be supposed that he has not heard of all the proper books; but unless he is near some library, I know not how he could peruse them; and if he is conscious that his *supellex* is *nimis angusta*, it would be prudent to delay his publication till his deficiencies may be supplied.

"It seems not very candid to hint any suspicions of imperfection in a work which I have not seen, yet what I have said ought to be excused, since I cannot but wish well to a learned man, who has elected me for the honour of a dedication, and to whom I am indebted for a correspondence so valuable as yours. And I beg that I may not lose any part of his kindness, which I consider with respectful gratitude. Of you, dear sir, I entreat that you will never again forget for so long a time your most humble servant, "SAMUEL JOHNSON."

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 447, an allusion to Mr. Mudge's notes on the Psalms, whence Mr. Chalmers very justly concludes that he is the person meant.—ED.]

"I am better, much better, and am now in hope of being gradually well, and of being able [to] show some gratitude for the kindness of my friends. I do not despair of seeing Oxford in the summer, and, in the meantime, hope now and then to see you here. I am, dear sir, your most obliged

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

Having given Dr. Johnson a full account of what I was doing at Auchinleck, and particularly mentioned what I knew would please him,—my having brought an old man of eighty-eight from a lonely cottage to a comfortable habitation within my inclosures, where he had good neighbours near to him, —I received an answer in February, of which I extract what follows:

"I am delighted with your account of your activity at Auchinleck, and wish the old gentleman, whom you have so kindly removed, may live long to promote your prosperity by his prayers. You have now a new character and new duties: think on them and practise them.

"Make an impartial estimate of your revenue; and whatever it is, live upon less. Resolve never to be poor. Frugality is not only the basis of quiet, but of beneficence. No man can help others that wants help himself. We must have enough before we have to spare.

"I am glad to find that Mrs. Boswell grows well; and hope that, to keep her well, no care nor caution will be omitted. May you long live happily together.

"When you come hither, pray bring with you Baxter's Anacreon. I cannot get that edition in London [1]."

On Friday, March 21, having arrived in London the night before, I was glad to find him at Mrs. Thrale's house, in Argyll-street, appearances of friendship between them being still kept up. I was shown into his room; and after the first salutation he said, "I am glad you are come; I am very ill." He

[1] Dr. Johnson should seem not to have sought diligently for Baxter's Anacreon; for there are two editions of that book, and they are frequently found in the London sale catalogues.—MALONE.

looked pale, and was distressed with a difficulty of breathing; but after the common inquiries, he assumed his usual strong animated style of conversation. Seeing me now for the first time as a *laird*, or proprietor of land, he began thus: "Sir, the superiority of a country gentleman over the people upon his estate is very agreeable; and he who says he does not feel it to be agreeable, lies; for it must be agreeable to have a casual superiority over those who are by nature equal with us." BOSWELL. "Yet, sir, we see great proprietors of land who prefer living in London." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the pleasure of living in London, the intellectual superiority that is enjoyed there, may counterbalance the other. Besides, sir, a man may prefer the state of the country gentleman upon the whole, and yet there may never be a moment when he is willing to make the change, to quit London for it." He said, "It is better to have five *per cent.* out of land, than out of money, because it is more secure; but the readiness of transfer and promptness of interest make many people rather choose the funds. Nay, there is another disadvantage belonging to land, compared with money: a man is not so much afraid of being a hard creditor, as of being a hard landlord." BOSWELL. "Because there is a sort of kindly connexion between a landlord and his tenants." JOHNSON. "No, sir; many landlords with us never see their tenants. It is because, if a landlord drives away his tenants, he may not get others; whereas the demand for money is so great, it may always be lent."

He talked with regret and indignation of the factious opposition to government at this time, and imputed it in a great measure to the revolution. "Sir," said he, in a low voice, having come nearer to me, while his old prejudices seemed to be fermenting in

his mind, "this Hanoverian family is *isolée* here. They have no friends. Now the Stuarts had friends who stuck by them so late as 1745. When the right of the king is not reverenced, there will not be reverence for those appointed by the king[1]."

His observation that the present royal family has no friends has been too much justified by the very ungrateful behaviour of many who were under great obligations to his majesty: at the same time there are honourable exceptions; and the very next year after this conversation, and ever since, the king has had as extensive and generous support as ever was given to any monarch, and has had the satisfaction of knowing that he was more and more endeared to his people.

He repeated to me his verses on Mr. Levett, with an emotion which gave them full effect; and then he was pleased to say, "You must be as much with me as you can. You have done me good. You cannot think how much better I am since you came in."

He sent a message to acquaint Mrs. Thrale that I was arrived. I had not seen her since her husband's death. She soon appeared, and favoured me with an invitation to stay to dinner, which I accepted. There was no other company but herself and three of her daughters, Dr. Johnson, and I. She too said

[1] [Even Johnson's mind was not superior to early prejudices. When he was young, no doubt there was a great body, perhaps the numerical majority of the nation, who were opposed to, or, at least, not cordial to the Hanover succession; but the events of 1745 showed how small in number and how weak in feeling the jacobites had become. The revolution, no doubt, and a great accession of strength to the democratic branch of the constitution—the more general diffusion of knowledge, and the greater spread of political discussion, led to what Dr. Johnson called *faction*, to the American revolt, and to all the important consequences which, since his time, have resulted from that event; amongst which is, no doubt, the looking upon the king rather as the *first magistrate* than as the object of the personal reverence and feudal enthusiasm of former days: but that any *jacobite* tendency, or any doubt of the *right* of the reigning family, entered *directly* into the political difficulties of the period in question, Dr. Johnson could not have dispassionately believed.—Ed.]

she was very glad I was come; for she was going to Bath, and should have been sorry to leave Dr. Johnson before I came. This seemed to be attentive and kind; and I, who had not been informed of any change [1], imagined all to be as well as formerly. He was little inclined to talk at dinner, and went to sleep after it; but when he joined us in the drawing-room he seemed revived, and was again himself.

Talking of conversation, he said, "There must, in the first place, be knowledge,—there must be materials; in the second place, there must be a command of words; in the third place, there must be imagination, to place things in such views as they are not commonly seen in; and, in the fourth place, there must be presence of mind, and a resolution that is not to be overcome by failures: this last is an essential requisite; for want of it many people do not excel in conversation. Now *I* want it; I throw up the game upon losing a trick." I wondered to hear him talk thus of himself, and said, "I don't know, sir, how this may be; but I am sure you beat other people's cards out of their hands." I doubt whether he heard this remark. While we went on talking triumphantly, I was fixed in admiration, and said to Mrs. Thrale, "O for short-hand to take this down!" "You'll carry it all in your head," said she: "a long head is as good as short-hand."

It has been observed and wondered at, that Mr. Charles Fox never talked with any freedom in the presence of Dr. Johnson; though it is well known, and I myself can witness, that his conversation is various, fluent, and exceedingly agreeable. Johnson's own experience, however, of that gentleman's reserve,

[1] [Nor was there, hitherto, any visible change. There was, as yet, no sign of that unhappy insanity (for it seems nothing less) which produced Mrs. Thrale's second marriage: see p. 37, *note*.—ED.]

was a sufficient reason for his going on thus: "Fox never talks in private company; not from any determination not to talk, but because he has not the first motion. A man who is used to the applause of the house of commons has no wish for that of a private company. A man accustomed to throw for a thousand pounds, if set down to throw for sixpence, would not be at the pains to count his dice. Burke's talk is the ebullition of his mind. He does not talk from a desire of distinction, but because his mind is full[1]."

He thus curiously characterised one of our old acquaintance: "*********[2] is a good man, sir; but he is a vain man and a liar. He, however, only tells lies of vanity; of victories, for instance, in conversation, which never happened." This alluded to a story, which I had repeated from that gentleman, to entertain Johnson with its wild bravado. "This Johnson, sir," said he, "whom you are all afraid of, will shrink, if you come close to him in argument, and roar as loud as he. He once maintained the paradox, that there is no beauty but in utility. 'Sir,' said I, 'what say you to the peacock's tail, which is one of the most beautiful objects in nature, but would have as much utility if its feathers were all of one colour.' He *felt* what I thus produced, and had recourse to his usual expedient, ridicule; exclaiming, 'A peacock has a tail, and a fox has a tail;' and then he burst out into a laugh. 'Well, sir,' said I, with a strong voice, looking him full in the face, 'you have unkennelled your fox;

[1] [This may seem somewhat at variance with the supposition that, in a former passage, *ante*, vol. iv. p. 101, Mr. Burke was alluded to; but we have seen how often Johnson could, in such matters, advance contradictory opinions.—Ed.]

[2] [This alludes to old Mr. Sheridan; and recollecting that Boswell *professes* to have endeavoured to reconcile him with Dr. Johnson, we cannot but wonder at the *mode* in which he attempted to accomplish that object.—Ed.]

pursue him if you dare.' He had not a word to say, sir." Johnson told me that this was fiction from beginning to end[1].

After musing for some time, he said, "I wonder how I should have any enemies; for I do harm to nobody[2]." BOSWELL. "In the first place, sir, you will be pleased to recollect that you set out with attacking the Scotch; so you got a whole nation for your enemies." JOHNSON. "Why, I own that by my definition of *oats* I meant to vex them." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, can you trace the cause of your antipathy to the Scotch?" JOHNSON. "I cannot, sir[3]." BOSWELL. "Old Mr. Sheridan says it was because they sold Charles the First." JOHNSON. "Then, sir, old Mr. Sheridan has found out a very good reason."

Surely the most obstinate and sulky nationality, the most determined aversion to this great and good man, must be cured, when he is seen thus playing with one of his prejudices, of which he candidly ad-

[1] Were I to insert all the stories which have been told of contests boldly maintained with him, imaginary victories obtained over him, of reducing him to silence, and of making him own that his antagonist had the better of him in argument, my volumes would swell to an immoderate size. One instance, I find, has circulated both in conversation and in print; that when he would not allow the Scotch writers to have merit, the late Dr. Rose, of Chiswick, asserted, that he could name one Scotch writer whom Dr. Johnson himself would allow to have written better than any man of the age; and upon Johnson's asking who it was, answered, "Lord Bute, when he signed the warrant for your pension." Upon which Johnson, struck with the repartee, acknowledged that this *was* true. When I mentioned it to Johnson, "Sir," said he, "if Rose said this, I never heard it."—BOSWELL.

[2] This reflection was very natural in a man of a good heart, who was not conscious of any ill-will to mankind, though the sharp sayings which were sometimes produced by his discrimination and vivacity, which he perhaps did not recollect, were, I am afraid, too often remembered with resentment.—BOSWELL.

[3] [When Johnson asserted so distinctly that he could not trace the cause of his antipathy to the Scotch, it may seem unjust to attribute to him any secret personal motive: but it is the essence of prejudice to be unconscious of its cause; and the editor is convinced in his own mind that Johnson received in early life some serious injury or affront from the Scotch. If Johnson's personal history during the years 1745 and 1746 were known, something would probably be found to account for this (as it now seems) absurd national aversion. —ED.]

mitted that he could not tell the reason. It was, however, probably owing to his having had in his view the worst part of the Scottish nation, the needy adventurers [1], many of whom he thought were advanced above their merits by means which he did not approve. Had he in his early life been in Scotland, and seen the worthy, sensible, independent gentlemen, who live rationally and hospitably at home, he never could have entertained such unfavourable and unjust notions of his fellow-subjects. And accordingly we find, that when he did visit Scotland, in the latter period of his life, he was fully sensible of all that it deserved, as I have already pointed out when speaking of his "Journey to the Western Islands."

Next day, Saturday, 22d March, I found him still at Mrs. Thrale's, but he told me that he was to go to his own house in the afternoon. He was better, but I perceived he was but an unruly patient; for Sir Lucas Pepys, who visited him, while I was with him said, "If you were *tractable*, sir, I should prescribe for you."

I related to him a remark which a respectable friend had made to me upon the then state of government, when those who had been long in opposition had attained to power, as it was supposed, against the inclination of the sovereign. "You need not be uneasy," said this gentleman, "about the king. He laughs at them all; he plays them one against

[1] [This can hardly have been the cause. Many of Johnson's earliest associates were indeed "needy Scotch adventurers;" that is, they were poor scholars, indigent men of education and talent, who brought those articles to the London market, as Dr. Johnson himself had done. Such were Sheils, Stewart, Macbean, &c. But Johnson had no aversion to *these* men: on the contrary, he lived with them in familiar friendship, did them active kindnesses, and with Macbean (who seems to have been the survivor of his earliest friends) he continued in the kindest intercourse to his last hour.—ED.]

another." JOHNSON. "Don't think so, sir. The king is as much oppressed as a man can be. If he plays them one against another, he *wins* nothing."

I had paid a visit to General Oglethorpe in the morning, and was told by him that Dr. Johnson saw company on Saturday evenings, and he would meet me at Johnson's that night. When I mentioned this to Johnson, not doubting that it would please him, as he had a great value for Oglethorpe, the fretfulness of his disease[1] unexpectedly showed itself; his anger suddenly kindled, and he said, with vehemence, "Did not you tell him not to come? Am I to be *hunted* in this manner?" I satisfied him that I could not divine that the visit would not be convenient, and that I certainly could not take it upon me of my own accord to forbid the general.

I found Dr. Johnson in the evening in Mrs. Williams's room, at tea and coffee with her and Mrs. Desmoulins, who were also both ill; it was a sad scene, and he was not in a very good humour. He said of a performance that had lately come out, "Sir, if you should search all the madhouses in England, you would not find ten men who would write so, and think it sense[2]."

I was glad when General Oglethorpe's arrival was announced, and we left the ladies. Dr. Johnson attended him in the parlour, and was as courteous as ever. The general said he was busy reading the writers of the middle age. Johnson said they were very curious. OGLETHORPE. "The house of com-

[1] [Johnson evidently suspected that Boswell, with his usual officiousness, had invited Oglethorpe to this unseasonable visit. When Johnson chides his overzealous friend for such intermeddling, Boswell, with easy self-complacency, can discover no cause for the reprimand but Johnson's sickness or ill-humour.—ED.]

[2] [The editor suspects that "Annus Mirabilis; or, the Eventful Year 1782, an Historical Poem, by the Rev. W. Tasker, author of the Warlike Genius of Britain," (see *ante*, vol. iv. p. 243) is here meant.—ED.]

mons has usurped [1] the power of the nation's money and used it tyrannically. Government is now carried on by corrupt influence, instead of the inherent right of the king." JOHNSON. "Sir, the want of inherent right in the king occasions all this disturbance. What we did at the revolution was necessary: but it broke our constitution [2]." OGLETHORPE. "My father did not think it necessary."

On Sunday, 23d March, I breakfasted with Dr. Johnson, who seemed much relieved, having taken opium the night before. He however protested against it, as a remedy that should be given with the utmost reluctance, and only in extreme necessity. I mentioned how commonly it was used in Turkey, and that therefore it could not be so pernicious as he apprehended. He grew warm, and said, "Turks take opium, and Christians take opium; but Russel, in his account of Aleppo, tells us, that it is as disgraceful in Turkey to take too much opium, as it is with us to get drunk. Sir, it is amazing how things are exaggerated. A gentleman was lately telling in a company where I was present, that in France as soon as a man of fashion marries, he takes an opera girl into keeping; and this he mentioned as a gene-

[1] [What could General Oglethorpe mean by saying that "the house of commons had *usurped* the power of the nation's money?" Since a house of commons has existed, has it not exercised the power of the nation's money? Then when he says that "government was carried on by corrupt influence, instead of the inherent right of the king," he must mean, if he means any thing, that the king ought to rule in his own exclusive right, and by his own despotic will, and without the aid or the control of parliament, whose assent to the measures of the crown must be obtained by *influence of some kind*, or anarchy must ensue. In short, if Mr. Boswell did not make an erroneous note, General Oglethorpe talked nonsense, which indeed there is reason to suspect that this amiable and garrulous old gentleman sometimes did.—ED.]

[2] I have, in my "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," fully expressed my sentiments upon this subject. The revolution was *necessary*, but not a subject for *glory*; because it for a long time blasted the generous feelings of *loyalty*. And now, when by the benignant effect of time the present royal family are established in our *affections*, how unwise is it to revive by celebrations the memory of a shock, which it would surely have been better that our constitution had not required!—BOSWELL.

ral custom. 'Pray, sir,' said I, 'how many opera girls may there be?' He answered, 'About fourscore.' 'Well then, sir,' said I, 'you see there can be no more than fourscore men of fashion who can do this[1].'"

Mrs. Desmoulins made tea; and she and I talked before him upon a topick which he had once borne patiently from me when we were by ourselves,—his not complaining of the world, because he was not called to some great office, nor had attained to great wealth. He flew into a violent passion, I confess with some justice, and commanded us to have done. "Nobody," said he, "has a right to talk in this manner, to bring before a man his own character, and the events of his life, when he does not choose it should be done. I never have sought the world; the world was not to seek me. It is rather wonderful that so much has been done for me. All the complaints which are made of the world are unjust. I never knew a man of merit neglected: it was generally by his own fault that he failed of success. A man may hide his head in a hole: he may go into the country, and publish a book now and then, which nobody reads, and then complain he is neglected. There is no reason why any person should exert himself for a man who has written a good book: he has not written it for any individual. I may as well make a present to the postman who brings me a letter. When patronage was limited, an authour expected to find a Mæcenas, and complained if he did not find one. Why should he complain? This

[1] [Yes, but it may be doubted whether there were fourscore persons whom the society of Paris would admit to be strictly and *par excellence* men of fashion. The fact, thus expressed with colloquial latitude, was substantially true; one of these degrading connexions was considered essential to those who pretended to the title of a *man of fashion*.—Ed.]

Mæcenas has others as good as he, or others who have got the start of him." BOSWELL. "But, surely, sir, you will allow that there are men of merit at the bar, who never get practice." JOHNSON. "Sir, you are sure that practice is got from an opinion that the person employed deserves it best; so that if a man of merit at the bar does not get practice, it is from errour, not from injustice. He is not neglected. A horse that is brought to market may not be bought, though he is a very good horse: but that is from ignorance, not from inattention."

There was in this discourse much novelty, ingenuity, and discrimination, such as is seldom to be found. Yet I cannot help thinking that men of merit, who have no success in life, may be forgiven for *lamenting*, if they are not allowed to *complain*. They may consider it as *hard* that their merit should not have its suitable distinction. Though there is no intentional injustice towards them on the part of the world, their merit not having been perceived, they may yet repine against *fortune*, or *fate*, or by whatever name they choose to call the supposed mythological power of *destiny*. It has, however, occurred to me, as a consolatory thought, that men of merit should consider thus:—How much harder would it be, if the same persons had both all the merit and all the prosperity? Would not this be a miserable distribution for the poor dunces? Would men of merit exchange their intellectual superiority, and the enjoyments arising from it, for external distinction and the pleasures of wealth? If they would not, let them not envy others, who are poor where they are rich, a compensation which is made to them. Let them look inwards and be satisfied; recollecting with conscious pride what Virgil finely says of the *Corycius*

Senex, and which I have, in another place[1], with truth and sincerity applied to Mr. Burke:

"Regum æquabat opes animis." 4 Geor. o. 132.

On the subject of the right employment of wealth, Johnson observed, "A man cannot make a bad use of his money, so far as regards society, if he does not hoard it[2]; for if he either spends it or lends it out, society has the benefit. It is in general better to spend money than to give it away; for industry is more promoted by spending money than by giving it away. A man who spends his money is sure he is doing good with it: he is not so sure when he gives it away. A man who spends ten thousand a year will do more good than a man who spends two thousand and gives away eight."

In the evening I came to him again. He was somewhat fretful from his illness. A gentleman asked him whether he had been abroad to-day. "Don't talk so childishly," said he. "You may as well ask if I hanged myself to-day." I mentioned politicks. JOHNSON. "Sir, I 'd as soon have a man to break my bones as talk to me of publick affairs, internal or external. I have lived to see things all as bad as they can be."

Having mentioned his friend, the second Lord Southwell, he said, "Lord Southwell was the highest-bred man without insolence, that I ever was in company with; the most *qualitied* I ever saw. Lord Orrery was not dignified; Lord Chesterfield was, but he was insolent. Lord ********* [3] is a man of coarse

[1] Letter to the People of Scotland against the Attempt to diminish the Number of the Lords of Session, 1785.

[2] [This surely is too broadly stated;—society is injured when money is spent in profligacy or corruption, or (as in the case of the *Egalité* Duke of Orleans) in exciting political sedition.—ED.]

[3] [Shelburne, the second Earl, afterwards first Marquis of Lansdowne.—ED.]

manners, but a man of abilities and information. I don't say he is a man I would set at the head of a nation, though perhaps he may be as good as the next prime minister that comes; but he is a man to be at the head of a club,—I don't say *our* CLUB,—for there 's no such club." BOSWELL. "But, sir, was he not a factious man?" JOHNSON. "O yes, sir, as factious a fellow as could be found; one who was for sinking us all into the mob." BOSWELL. "How then, sir, did he get into favour with the king?" JOHNSON. "Because, sir, I suppose he promised the king to do whatever the king pleased."

He said, "Goldsmith's blundering speech to Lord Shelburne, which has been so often mentioned, and which he really did make to him, was only a blunder in emphasis:—'I wonder they should call your lordship *Malagrida*, for Malagrida was a very good man;'—meant, I wonder they should use *Malagrida* as a term of reproach[1]."

Soon after this time I had an opportunity of seeing, by means of one of his friends, a proof that his talents, as well as his obliging service to authours, were ready as ever. He had revised "The Village," an admirable poem, by the Reverend Mr. Crabbe[2]. Its sentiments as to the false notions of rustick happiness and rustick virtue were quite congenial with his own; and he had taken the trouble not only to suggest slight corrections and variations, but to furnish some

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 299.—ED.]

[2] [This amiable gentleman is still alive, resident in his rectory of Trowbridge, in Wiltshire. His subsequent publications have placed him high in the roll of British poets—though his having taken a view of life too minute, too humiliating, too painful, and too just, may have deprived his works of so extensive, or, at least, so brilliant, a popularity as some of his contemporaries have attained; but the Editor ventures to believe, that there is no poet of his times who will stand higher in the opinion of posterity. He generally deals with "the short and simple annals of the poor," but he exhibits them with such a deep knowledge of human nature,—with such general ease and simplicity, and such accurate force of expression, whether gay or pathetical, as, in the Editor's humble judgment, no poet, except Shakspeare, has excelled.—ED.]

lines when he thought he could give the writer's meaning better than in the words of the manuscript [1].

On Sunday, March 30, I found him at home in the evening, and had the pleasure to meet with Dr. Brocklesby, whose reading, and knowledge of life, and good spirits, supply him with a never-failing source of conversation. He mentioned a respectable gentleman, who became extremely penurious near the close of his life. Johnson said there must have been a degree of madness about him. "Not at all, sir," said Dr. Brocklesby, "his judgment was entire." Unluckily, however, he mentioned that although he had a fortune of twenty-seven thousand pounds, he denied himself many comforts, from an apprehension that he could not afford them. "Nay, sir," cried Johnson, "when the judgment is so disturbed that a man cannot count, that is pretty well."

I shall here insert a few of Johnson's sayings, without the formality of dates, as they have no reference to any particular time or place.

"The more a man extends and varies his acquaintance the better." This, however, was meant with a just restriction; for he on another occasion said to me, "Sir, a man may be so much of every thing, that he is nothing of any thing."

[1] I shall give an instance, making the original by Roman, and Johnson's substitution in Italick characters:

"In fairer scenes, where peaceful pleasures spring,
Tityrus, the pride of Mantuan swains, might sing;
But charm'd by him, or smitten with his views,
Shall modern poets court the Mantuan muse?
From truth and nature shall we widely stray,
Where fancy leads, or Virgil led the way?

On Mincio's banks, in Cæsar's bounteous reign,
If Tityrus found the golden age again,
Must sleepy bards the flattering dream prolong,
Mechanick echoes of the Mantuan song?
From truth and nature shall we widely stray,
Where Virgil, not where fancy, leads the way?"

Here we find Johnson's poetical and critical powers undiminished. I must, however, observe, that the aids he gave to this poem, as to "The Traveller," and "Deserted Village" of Goldsmith, were so small as by no means to impair the distinguished merit of the authour.—BOSWELL.

"Raising the wages of day-labourers is wrong; for it does not make them live better, but only makes them idler, and idleness is a very bad thing for human nature."

"It is a very good custom to keep a journal for a man's own use; he may write upon a card a day all that is necessary to be written, after he has had experience of life. At first there is a great deal to be written, because there is a great deal of novelty; but when once a man has settled his opinions, there is seldom much to be set down."

"There is nothing wonderful in the Journal[1] which we see Swift kept in London, for it contains slight topicks, and it might soon be written."

I praised the accuracy of an account-book of a lady whom I mentioned. JOHNSON. "Keeping accounts, sir, is of no use when a man is spending his own money, and has nobody to whom he is to account. You won't eat less beef to-day, because you have written down what it cost yesterday." I mentioned another lady who thought as he did, so that her husband could not get her to keep an account of the expense of the family, as she thought it enough that she never exceeded the sum allowed her. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is fit she should keep an account, because her husband wishes it; but I do not see its use." I maintained that keeping an account has this advantage, that it satisfies a man that his money has not been lost or stolen, which he might sometimes be apt

[1] In his Life of Swift, he thus speaks of this Journal: "In the midst of his power and his politics, he kept a journal of his visits, his walks, his interviews with ministers, and quarrels with his servant, and transmitted it to Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Dingley, to whom he knew that whatever befel him was interesting, and no account could be too minute. Whether these diurnal trifles were properly exposed to eyes which had never received any pleasure from the dean, may be reasonably doubted: they have, however, some odd attractions: the reader finding frequent mention of names which he has been used to consider as important, goes on in hope of information; and, as there is nothing to fatigue attention, if he is disappointed, he can hardly complain." It may be added, that the reader not only hopes to find, but does find, in this very entertaining Journal, much curious information, respecting persons and things, which he will in vain seek for in other books of the same period.—MALONE.

to imagine, were there no written state of his expense; and, besides, a calculation of economy, so as not to exceed one's income, cannot be made without a view of the different articles in figures, that one may see how to retrench in some particulars less necessary than others. This he did not attempt to answer.

Talking of an acquaintance of ours, whose narratives, which abounded in curious and interesting topicks, were unhappily found to be very fabulous; I mentioned Lord Mansfield's having said to me, "Suppose we believe one *half* of what he tells." JOHNSON. "Ay; but we don't know *which* half to believe. By his lying we lose not only our reverence for him, but all comfort in his conversation." BOSWELL. "May we not take it as amusing fiction?" JOHNSON. "Sir, the misfortune is, that you will insensibly believe as much of it as you incline to believe."

It is remarkable, that notwithstanding their congeniality in politicks, he never was acquainted with a late eminent noble judge[1], whom I have heard speak of him as a writer with great respect. Johnson, I know not upon what degree of investigation, entertained no exalted opinion of his lordship's intellectual character. Talking of him to me one day, he said, "It is wonderful, sir, with how little real superiority of mind men can make an eminent figure in public life." He expressed himself to the same purpose concerning another law-lord[2], who, it seems, once took a fancy to associate with the wits of London; but with so little success, that Foote said, "What can he mean by coming among us? He is not only dull himself, but the cause of dulness in others." Trying him by the test of his colloquial powers, Johnson had found him very defective. He once said to Sir Joshua Rey-

[1] [No doubt Lord Mansfield. See *ante*, v. ii. p. 151.—ED.]
[2] [Probably Lord Loughborough.—ED.]

nolds, "This man now has been ten years about town, and has made nothing of it;" meaning as a companion[1]. He said to me, "I never heard any thing from him in company that was at all striking; and depend upon it, sir, it is when you come close to a man in conversation, that you discover what his real abilities are: to make a speech in a public assembly is a knack. Now, I honour Thurlow, sir; Thurlow is a fine fellow; he fairly puts his mind to yours."

After repeating to him some of his pointed, lively sayings, I said, "It is a pity, sir, you don't always remember your own good things, that you may have a laugh when you will." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, it is better that I forget them, that I may be reminded of them, and have a laugh on their being brought to my recollection."

When I recalled to him his having said, as we sailed up Lochlomond, "That if he wore any thing fine, it should be *very* fine;" I observed that all his thoughts were upon a great scale. JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, sir, every man will have as fine a thing as he can get; as large a diamond for his ring." BOSWELL. "Pardon me, sir: a man of a narrow mind will not think of it; a slight trinket will satisfy him:

Juv. 1 Sat. 29. '' Nec sufferre queat majoris pondera gemmæ.' "

I told him I should send him some "Essays" which I had written[2], which I hoped he would be so good as to read, and pick out the good ones. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, send me only the good ones: don't make *me* pick them."

[1] Knowing as well as I do what precision and elegance of oratory his lordship can display, I cannot but suspect that his unfavourable appearance in a social circle, which drew such animadversions upon him, must be owing to a cold affectation of consequence, from being reserved and stiff. If it be so, and he might be an agreeable man if he would, we cannot be sorry that he misses his aim.—BOSWELL.

[2] Under the title of "The Hypochondriack."—MALONE.

[They are to be found in the London Magazine from 1775 to 1784.—ED.]

I heard him once say, "Though the proverb '*Nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia,*' does not always prove true, we may be certain of the converse of it, *Nullum numen adest, si sit imprudentia*[1]."

Once, when Mr. Seward was going to Bath, and asked his commands, he said, "Tell Dr. Harington that I wish he would publish another volume of the '*Nugæ Antiquæ*[2];' it is a very pretty book[3]." Mr. Seward seconded this wish, and recommended to Dr. Harington to dedicate it to Johnson, and take for his motto what Catullus says to Cornelius Nepos:

"———— namque tu solebas
Meas esse aliquid putare NUGAS."

As a small proof of his kindliness and delicacy of feeling, the following circumstance may be mentioned: One evening, when we were in the street together, and I told him I was going to sup at Mr. Beauclerk's, he said, "I'll go with you." After having walked part of the way, seeming to recollect something, he suddenly stopped and said, "I cannot go,—but *I do not love Beauclerk the less.*"

On the frame of his portrait Mr. Beauclerk had inscribed

"———— Ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore[4]."

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[1] [Mrs. Piozzi gives a more classical version of Johnson's variation: "Nullum numen adest ni sit prudentia." *Ante*, vol. iv. p. 18.—ED.]

[2] It has since appeared.—BOSWELL. [Though the MSS., of which this work was composed, had descended to Dr. Harington, the work was not edited by him, but by the Reverend Henry Harington, M.A.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

[3] A new and greatly improved edition of this very curious collection was published by Mr. Park in 1804, in two volumes, octavo. In this edition the letters are chronologically arranged, and the account of the bishops, which was formerly printed from a very corrupt copy, is taken from Sir John Harrington's original manuscript, which he presented to Henry, Prince of Wales, and is now in the royal library in the museum.—MALONE.

[4] [The whole passage is very descriptive of Johnson:

"———— Iracundior est paulo: minus aptus acutis
Naribus horum hominum: rideri possit eo quod
Rusticius tonso toga defluit: et male laxus
In pede calceus hæret: at est bonus, ut melior vir
Non alius quisquam: at tibi amicus: at ingenium ingens
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore."—*Hor. Sat.* iii. lib. i. 27.—ED.]

After Mr. Beauclerk's death, when it became Mr. Langton's property, he made the inscription be defaced. Johnson said complacently, "It was kind in you to take it off;" and then, after a short pause, added, "and not unkind in him to put it on."

He said, "How few of his friends' houses would a man choose to be at when he is sick!" He mentioned one or two. I recollect only Thrale's.

He observed, "There is a wicked inclination in most people to suppose an old man decayed in his intellects. If a young or middle-aged man, when leaving a company, does not recollect where he laid his hat, it is nothing; but if the same inattention is discovered in an old man, people will shrug up their shoulders, and say, 'His memory is going.'"

When I once talked to him of some of the sayings which every body repeats, but nobody knows where to find, such as *Quos* DEUS *vult perdere, prius dementat;* he told me that he was once offered ten guineas to point out from whence *Semel insanivimus omnes* was taken. He could not do it; but many years afterwards met with it by chance in *Johannes Baptista Mantuanus*[1].

[1] The words occur (as Mr. Bindley observes to me) in the first Eclogue of Mantuanus, "De Honesto Amore," &c.

"Id commune malum; semel insanivimus omnes."

With the following elucidation of the other saying—*Quos Deus* (it should rather be, *Quem Jupiter*) *vult perdere, prius dementat*—Mr. Boswell was furnished by Mr. Richard How, of Aspley, in Bedfordshire, as communicated to that gentleman by his friend, Mr. John Pitts, late rector of Great Brickhill in Buckinghamshire: "Perhaps no scrap of Latin whatever has been more quoted than this. It occasionally falls even from those who are scrupulous even to pedantry in their Latinity, and will not admit a word into their compositions which has not the sanction of the first age." The word *dementa* is of no authority, either as a verb active or neuter. After a long search, for the purpose of deciding a bet, some gentlemen of Cambridge found it among the fragments of Euripides, in what edition I do not recollect, where it is given as a translation of a Greek Iambick:

Ον θεὸς θέλει ἀπόλεσαι, πρῶτ' ἀποφρένει.

"The above scrap was found in the hand-writing of a suicide of fashion, Sir D. O., some years ago, lying on the table of the room where he had destroyed himself. The suicide was a man of classical acquirements: he left no other paper behind him." Another of these proverbial sayings,

"Incidit in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim,"

I am very sorry that I did not take a note of an eloquent argument, in which he maintained that the situation of Prince of Wales was the happiest of any person's in the kingdom, even beyond that of the sovereign. I recollect only—the enjoyment of hope—the high superiority of rank, without the anxious cares of government—and a great degree of power, both from natural influence wisely used, and from the sanguine expectations of those who look forward to the chance of future favour.

Sir Joshua Reynolds communicated to me the following particulars:

Johnson thought the poems published as translations from Ossian had so little merit, that he said, "Sir, a man might write such stuff for ever, if he would *abandon* his mind to it."

He said, "A man should pass a part of his time with *the laughers*, by which means any thing ridiculous or particular about him might be presented to his view, and corrected." I observed, he must have been a bold laugher who would have ventured to tell Dr. Johnson of any of his peculiarities[1].

I, some years ago, in a note on a passage in The Merchant of Venice, traced to its source. It occurs (with a slight variation) in the Alexandreis of Philip Gualtier (a poet of the thirteenth century), which was printed at Lyons in 1558. Darius is the person addressed:

"——— Quo tendis inertem,
Rex periture, fugam? nescis, heu! perdite, nescis
Quem fugias: hostes incurris dum fugis hostem;
Incidis in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim."

The authour of this line was first acertained by Galleottus Martius, who died in 1476, as is observed in Menagiana, vol. iii. p. 130, edit. 1762. For an account of Philip Gualtier, see Vossius de Poet. Latin., p. 254, fol. 1697. A line, not less frequently quoted than any of the preceding, was suggested for inquiry, several years ago, in a note on The Rape of Lucrece:

"Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris."

But the authour of this verse has not, I believe, been discovered.—MALONE.

[1] I am happy, however, to mention a pleasing instance of his enduring with great gentleness to hear one of his most striking particularities pointed out: Miss Hunter, a niece of his friend, Christopher Smart, when a very young girl, struck by his extraordinary motions, said to him, "Pray, Dr. Johnson, why do you make such strange gestures?" "From bad habit," he replied. "Do you, my dear, take care to guard against bad habits." This I was told by the young lady's brother at Margate.—BOSWELL.

Having observed the vain ostentatious importance of many people in quoting the authority of dukes and lords, as having been in their company, he said, he went to the other extreme, and did not mention his authority when he should have done it, had it not been that of a duke or a lord.

Dr. Goldsmith said once to Dr. Johnson that he wished for some additional members to the Literary Club, to give it an agreeable variety; "for," said he, "there can now be nothing new among us: we have travelled over one another's minds. Johnson seemed a little angry, and said, "Sir, you have not travelled over *my* mind, I promise you." Sir Joshua, however, thought Goldsmith right; observing, that "when people have lived a great deal together, they know what each of them will say on every subject. A new understanding, therefore, is desirable; because though it may only furnish the same sense upon a question which would have been furnished by those with whom we are accustomed to live, yet this sense will have a different colouring; and colouring is of much effect in every thing else as well as in painting."

Johnson used to say that he made it a constant rule to talk as well as he could, both as to sentiment and expression; by which means, what had been originally effort became familiar and easy. The consequence of this, Sir Joshua observed, was, that his common conversation in all companies was such as to secure him universal attention, as something above the usual colloquial style was expected.

Yet, though Johnson had this habit in company, when another mode was necessary, in order to investigate truth, he could descend to a language intelligible to the meanest capacity. An instance of this was witnessed by Sir Joshua Reynolds, when they were present at an examination of a little blackguard

boy, by Mr. Saunders Welch, the late Westminster justice. Welch, who imagined that he was exalting himself in Dr. Johnson's eyes by using big words, spoke in a manner that was utterly unintelligible to the boy; Dr. Johnson perceiving it, addressed himself to the boy, and changed the pompous phraseology into colloquial language. Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was much amused by this proceeding, which seemed a kind of reversing of what might have been expected from the two men, took notice of it to Dr. Johnson, as they walked away by themselves. Johnson said, that it was continually the case; and that he was always obliged to *translate* the justice's swelling diction (smiling), so as that his meaning might be understood by the vulgar, from whom information was to be obtained.

Sir Joshua once observed to him, that he had talked above the capacity of some people with whom they had been in company together. "No matter, sir," said Johnson; "they consider it as a compliment to be talked to as if they were wiser than they are. So true is this, sir, that Baxter made it a rule in every sermon that he preached to say something that was above the capacity of his audience[1]."

Johnson's dexterity in retort, when he seemed to be driven to an extremity by his adversary, was very remarkable. Of his power, in this respect, our com-

[1] The justness of this remark is confirmed by the following story, for which I am indebted to Lord Eliot:—A country parson, who was remarkable for quoting scraps of Latin in his sermons, having died, one of his parishioners was asked how he liked his successor: "He is a very good preacher," was his answer, "but no *Latiner*."—BOSWELL. [Mr. Chalmers' makes this anecdote interesting by giving it "a local habitation and a name." This "very good preacher" was, he says, the celebrated Dr. Edward Pocock, who had a living at Childry, near Oxford. One of his Oxford friends, as he travelled through Childry, inquiring, for his diversion, of some people, who was their minister? and how they liked him? received from them this answer: "Our parson is one Mr. Pocock, a plain, honest man; but, master," said they, "he is no *Latiner*."—*Pocock's Life*, sect. iii.—ED.]

mon friend, Mr. Windham, of Norfolk, has been pleased to furnish me with an eminent instance. However unfavourable to Scotland, he uniformly gave liberal praise to George Buchanan, as a writer. In a conversation concerning the literary merits of the two countries, in which Buchanan was introduced, a Scotchman, imagining that on this ground he should have an undoubted triumph over him, exclaimed, "Ah, Dr. Johnson, what would you have said of Buchanan had he been an Englishman?" "Why, sir," said Johnson, after a little pause, "I should *not* have said of Buchanan, had he been an *Englishman*, what I will now say of him as *Scotchman*,—that he was the only man of genius his country ever produced [1]."

And this brings to my recollection another instance of the same nature. I once reminded him that when Dr. Adam Smith was expatiating on the beauty of Glasgow, he had cut him short by saying, "Pray, sir, have you ever seen Brentford?" and I took the liberty to add, "My dear sir, surely that was *shocking*." "Why then, sir," he replied, "YOU have never seen Brentford."

Piozzi Anec. p. 133.

[When his friend Mr. Strahan, a native of Scotland, at his return from the Hebrides asked him, with a firm tone of voice, what he thought of his country? "That it is a very vile country to be sure, sir;" returned for answer Dr. Johnson. "Well, sir!" replies the other somewhat mortified, "God made it." "Certainly he did," answers Dr. Johnson again;

[1] This prompt and sarcastic retort may not unaptly be compared with Sir Henry Wotton's celebrated answer to a priest in Italy, who asked him "Where was your religion to be found before Luther?" "My religion was to be found then, where yours is not to be found now, in the written word of God." But Johnson's admirable reply has a sharper edge and perhaps more ingenuity than that of Wotton.—MALONE. [In Selden's *Table Talk* we have the following more witty reply made to this same question: "Where was America an hundred or six score years ago?"—J. H. MARKLAND.]

" but we must always remember that he made it for Scotchmen, and comparisons are odious, Mr. Strahan; but God made hell."]

Though his usual phrase for conversation was *talk*, yet he made a distinction; for when he once told me that he dined the day before at a friend's house, with "a very pretty company;" and I asked him if there was good conversation, he answered, "No, sir; we had *talk* enough, but no *conversation;* there was nothing *discussed.*"

Talking of the success of the Scotch in London, he imputed it in a considerable degree to their spirit of nationality. "You know, sir," said he, "that no Scotchman publishes a book, or has a play brought upon the stage, but there are five hundred people ready to applaud him."

He gave much praise to his friend Dr. Burney's elegant and entertaining Travels, and told Mr. Seward that he had them in his eye when writing his "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland."

Such was his sensibility, and so much was he affected by pathetick poetry, that, when he was reading Dr. Beattie's "Hermit," in my presence, it brought tears into his eyes[1].

He disapproved much of mingling real facts with fiction. On this account he censured a book entitled "Love and Madness."

Mr. Hoole told him he was born in Moorfields, and had received part of his early instruction in Grub-street. "Sir," said Johnson, smiling, "you have been *regularly* educated." Having asked who was his instructor, and Mr. Hoole having answered, "My uncle, sir, who was a tailor;" Johnson, recollecting himself, said, "Sir, I knew him: we called him the

[1] The particular passage which excited this strong emotion was, as I have heard from my father, the third stanza, "'Tis night," &c.—J. BOSWELL. [It is the *fourth* stanza.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

metaphysical tailor. He was of a club in Old-street, with me and George Psalmanazar, and some others: but pray, sir, was he a good tailor?" Mr. Hoole having answered that he believed he was too mathematical, and used to draw squares and triangles on his shopboard, so that he did not excel in the cut of a coat,—"I am sorry for it," said Johnson, "for I would have every man to be master of his own business."

Hawk. p. 547. [This probably was the person to whom the following anecdote, told by Sir J. Hawkins, relates. Johnson would frequently adjourn with Psalmanazar from his lodgings to a neighbouring alehouse, and, in the common room, converse with him on subjects of importance. In one of these conversations, Johnson took occasion to remark on the human mind, that it had a necessary tendency to improvement, and that it would frequently anticipate instruction, and enable ingenious minds to acquire knowledge. "Sir," said a stranger that overheard him, "that I deny: I am a tailor, and have had many apprentices, but never one that could make a coat till I had taken great pains in teaching him."]

In pleasant reference to himself and Mr. Hoole, as brother authours, he often said, "Let you and I, sir, go together, and eat a beef-steak in Grub-street."

Sir William Chambers, that great architect, whose works show a sublimity[1] of genius, and who is esteemed by all who know him, for his social, hospitable, and generous qualities, submitted the manuscript of his "Chinese Architecture" to Dr. Johnson's perusal. Johnson was much pleased with it, and said, "It wants no addition nor correction, but a few lines of

[1] [The Editor does not recollect any work of Sir W. Chambers which can be said to exhibit "*sublimity of genius*."—ED.]

introduction;" which he furnished, and Sir William adopted [1].

He said to Sir William Scott, "The age is running mad after innovation; and all the business of the world is to be done in a new way; men are to be hanged in a new way; Tyburn itself is not safe from the fury of innovation." It having been argued that this was an improvement,—"No, sir," said he, eagerly, "it is *not* an improvement; they object, that the old method drew together a number of spectators. Sir, executions are intended to draw spectators. If they do not draw spectators, they don't answer their purpose. The old method was most satisfactory to all parties; the publick was gratified by a procession; the criminal was supported by it [2]. Why is all this to be swept away?" I perfectly agree with Dr. Johnson upon this head, and am persuaded that executions now, the solemn procession being discontinued, have not nearly the effect which they formerly had. Magistrates, both in London and elsewhere, have, I am afraid, in this had too much regard to their own ease.

Of Dr. Hurd, Bishop of Worcester, Johnson said

[1] The Honourable Horace Walpole, now Earl of Orford, thus bears testimony to this gentleman's merit as a writer: "Mr. Chambers's 'Treatise on Civil Architecture' is the most sensible book, and the most exempt from prejudices, that ever was written on that science."—Preface to *Anecdotes of Painting in England.* The introductory lines are these: "It is difficult to avoid praising too little or too much. The boundless panegyricks which have been lavished upon the Chinese learning, policy, and arts, show with what power novelty attracts regard, and how naturally esteem swells into admiration.

"I am far from desiring to be numbered among the exaggerators of Chinese excellence. I consider them as great, or wise, only in comparison with the nations that surround them; and have no intention to place them in competition either with the ancients or with the moderns of this part of the world; yet they must be allowed to claim our notice as a distinct and very singular race of men; as the inhabitants of a region divided by its situation from all civilized countries, who have formed their own manners, and invented their own arts, without the assistance of example."—BOSWELL.

[2] [What could Dr. Johnson have meant by saying, that the criminal was *supported by a public procession*? The reverse is obviously the truth. It must be recollected that Boswell had the mania of witnessing executions. —ED.]

to a friend,—"Hurd, sir, is one of a set of men who account for every thing systematically; for instance, it has been a fashion to wear scarlet breeches; these men would tell you, that according to causes and effects, no other wear could at that time have been chosen." He, however, said of him at another time to the same gentleman, "Hurd, sir, is a man whose acquaintance is a valuable acquisition."

That learned and ingenious prelate, it is well known, published at one period of his life "Moral and Political Dialogues," with a wofully whiggish cast. Afterwards, his lordship having thought better, came to see his error, and republished the work with a more constitutional spirit. Johnson, however, was unwilling to allow him full credit for his political conversion. I remember when his lordship declined the honour of being archbishop of Canterbury, Johnson said, "I am glad he did not go to Lambeth; for, after all, I fear he is a whig in his heart."

Johnson's attention to precision and clearness in expression was very remarkable. He disapproved of a parenthesis; and I believe in all his voluminous writings, not half a dozen of them will be found. He never used the phrases *the former* and *the latter*, having observed, that they often occasioned obscurity; he therefore contrived to construct his sentences so as not to have occasion for them, and would even rather repeat the same words, in order to avoid them. Nothing is more common than to mistake surnames, when we hear them carelessly uttered for the first time. To prevent this, he used not only to pronounce them slowly and distinctly, but to take the trouble of spelling them; a practice which I have often followed, and which I wish were general.

Such was the heat and irritability of his blood, that not only did he pare his nails to the quick, but scraped

the joints of his fingers with a penknife, till they seemed quite red and raw [1].

The heterogeneous composition of human nature was remarkably exemplified in Johnson. His liberality in giving his money to persons in distress was extraordinary. Yet there lurked about him a propensity to paltry saving. One day I owned to him, that "I was occasionally troubled with a fit of *narrowness*." "Why, sir," said he, "so am I. *But I do not tell it.*" He has now and then borrowed a shilling of me; and when I asked him for it again, seemed to be rather out of humour. A droll little circumstance once occurred; as if he meant to reprimand my minute exactness as a creditor, he thus addressed me;—"Boswell, lend me sixpence—*not to be repaid.*"

This great man's attention to small things was very remarkable. As an instance of it, he one day said to me, "Sir, when you get silver in change for a guinea, look carefully at it; you may find some curious piece of coin."

Though a stern *true-born Englishman*, and fully prejudiced against all other nations, he had discernment enough to see, and candour enough to censure, the cold reserve too common among Englishmen towards strangers: "Sir," said he, "two men of any other nation who are shown into a room together, at a house where they are both visitors, will immediately find some conversation. But two Englishmen will probably go each to a different window, and remain in obstinate silence. Sir, we as yet do not enough understand the common rights of humanity."

Johnson was at a certain period of his life a good

[1] [This looks like what Mr. Partridge would call a *non sequitur*; at least, the Editor does not see how extreme heat and irritability of the blood should cause a man to pare his nails too close.—Ed.]

deal with the Earl of Shelburne[1], now Marquis of Lansdown, as he doubtless could not but have a due value for that nobleman's activity of mind, and uncommon acquisitions of important knowledge, however much he might disapprove of other parts of his lordship's character, which were widely different from his own.

Maurice Morgann, Esq., author of the very ingenious "Essay on the Character of Falstaff[2]," being a particular friend of his lordship, had once an opportunity of entertaining Johnson a day or two at Wycombe, when its lord was absent, and by him I have been favoured with two anecdotes.

One is not a little to the credit of Johnson's candour. Mr. Morgann and he had a dispute pretty late at night, in which Johnson would not give up, though he had the wrong side; and, in short, both kept the field. Next morning, when they met in the breakfasting-room, Dr. Johnson accosted Mr. Morgann thus: "Sir, I have been thinking on our dispute last night;—*You were in the right.*"

The other was as follows: Johnson, for sport perhaps, or from the spirit of contradiction, eagerly maintained that Derrick had merit as a writer. Mr. Morgann argued with him directly, in vain. At length he had recourse to this device. "Pray, sir," said he, "whether do you reckon Derrick or Smart the best poet?" Johnson at once felt himself roused; and answered, "Sir, there is no settling the point of precedency between a louse and a flea."

[It has been asserted (*European Mag.* 1796,

[1] [The accuracy of this assertion seems doubtful; at which period of his life could Johnson "*have been a good deal with Lord Shelburne?*" words that imply a familiar intercourse: of which neither in Mr. Boswell's detail of his life, nor in his letters, does any trace appear. See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 120, *note*.—ED.]

[2] Johnson being asked his opinion of this Essay, answered, "Why, sir, we shall have the man come forth again; and as he has proved Falstaff to be no coward, he may prove Iago to be a very good character."

p. 16), that the foregoing comparison was made, not between Derrick and *Smart*, but between Derrick and *Boyce*, a person] [of whose ingenuity and distress Johnson told some curious anecdotes; particularly that when he was almost perishing with hunger, and some money was produced to purchase him a dinner, he got a bit of roast beef, but could not eat it without ketchup, and laid out the last half-guinea he possessed in truffles and mushrooms, eating them in bed too, for want of clothes, or even a shirt to sit up in.] Piozzi Anec. p. 92.

Once, when checking my boasting too frequently of myself in company, he said to me, "Boswell, you often vaunt so much as to provoke ridicule. You put me in mind of a man who was standing in the kitchen of an inn with his back to the fire, and thus accosted the person next him. 'Do you know, sir, who I am?' 'No, sir,' said the other, 'I have not that advantage.' 'Sir,' said he, 'I am the *great* Twalmley, who invented the New Floodgate Iron [1].'" The Bishop of Killaloe, on my repeating the story to him, defended Twalmley, by observing that he was entitled to the epithet of *great;* for Virgil in his group of worthies in the Elysian fields—

Hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi, &c. Æn. 6. v. 660.

mentions

Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes. v. 663.

He was pleased to say to me one morning when we were left alone in his study, "Boswell, I think I am easier with you than with almost any body."

He would not allow Mr. David Hume any credit for his political principles, though similar to his own; saying of him, "Sir, he was a tory by chance."

[1] What the *great* Twalmley was so proud of having invented was neither more nor less than a kind of box-iron for smoothing linen.—BOSWELL.

His acute observation of human life made him remark, "Sir, there is nothing by which a man exasperates most people more than by displaying a superior ability of brilliancy in conversation. They seem pleased at the time; but their envy makes them curse him at their hearts[1]."

My readers will probably be surprised to hear that the great Dr. Johnson could amuse himself with so slight and playful a species of composition as a *charade*. I have recovered one which he made on Dr. Barnard, now Lord Bishop of Killaloe; who has been pleased for many years to treat me with so much intimacy and social ease, that I may presume to call him not only my right reverend, but my very dear friend. I therefore with peculiar pleasure give to the world a just and elegant compliment thus paid to his lordship by Johnson.

CHARADE.

"My *first*[2] shuts out thieves from your house or your room,
My *second*[3] expresses a Syrian perfume.
My *whole*[4] is a man in whose converse is shared
The strength of a Bar and the sweetness of Nard."

Johnson asked Richard Owen Cambridge, Esq. if he had read the Spanish translation of Sallust, said to be written by a prince of Spain, with the assistance of his tutor, who is professedly the authour of a treatise annexed, on the Phœnician language.

Mr. Cambridge commended the work, particularly as he thought the translator understood his authour better than is commonly the case with translators; but said, he was disappointed in the purpose for which he borrowed the book; to see whether a Spaniard

[1] [This may be doubted. Johnson himself was, as we have seen, sometimes envious of the brilliancy of his friends; but, in general, surely persons of a brilliant conversation (if it be not sarcastic) are rather popular.—ED.]

[2] Bar. [3] Nard. [4] Barnard.

could be better furnished with inscriptions from monuments, coins, or other antiquities, which he might more probably find on a coast so immediately opposite to Carthage, than the antiquaries of any other countries. JOHNSON. "I am very sorry you were not gratified in your expectations." CAMBRIDGE. "The language would have been of little use, as there is no history existing in that tongue to balance the partial accounts which the Roman writers have left us." JOHNSON. "No, sir. They have not been *partial*, they have told their own story without shame or regard to equitable treatment of their injured enemy; they had no compunction, no feeling for a Carthaginian. Why, sir, they would never have borne Virgil's description of Eneas's treatment of Dido, if she had not been a Carthaginian."

I gratefully acknowledge this and other communications from Mr. Cambridge, whom, if a beautiful villa on the banks of the Thames, a few miles distant from London, a numerous and excellent library, which he accurately knows and reads, a choice collection of pictures, which he understands and relishes, an easy fortune, an amiable family, an extensive circle of friends and acquaintance, distinguished by rank, fashion, and genius, a literary fame, various, elegant, and still increasing, colloquial talents rarely to be found, and, with all these means of happiness, enjoying, when well advanced in years, health and vigour of body, serenity and animation of mind, do not entitle to be addressed *fortunate senex!* I know not to whom, in any age, that expression could with propriety have been used. Long may he live to hear and to feel it[1]!

[1] Mr. Cambridge enjoyed all the blessings here enumerated for many years after this passage was written. He died at his seat near Twickenham, Sept. 17, 1802, in his eighty-sixth year.—MALONE.

Johnson's love of little children, which he discovered upon all occasions, calling them "pretty dears," and giving them sweetmeats, was an undoubted proof of the real humanity and gentleness of his disposition [1].

His uncommon kindness to his servants, and serious concern, not only for their comfort in this world, but their happiness in the next, was another unquestionable evidence of what all, who were intimately acquainted with him, knew to be true.

Nor would it be just, under this head, to omit the fondness which he showed for animals which he had taken under his protection. I never shall forget the indulgence with which he treated Hodge, his cat; for whom he himself used to go out and buy oysters, lest the servants, having that trouble, should take a dislike to the poor creature. I am, unluckily, one of those who have an antipathy to a cat, so that I am uneasy when in the room with one; and I own I frequently suffered a good deal from the presence of this same Hodge. I recollect him one day scrambling up Dr. Johnson's breast, apparently with much satisfaction, while my friend, smiling and half-whistling, rubbed down his back, and pulled him by the tail; and when I observed he was a fine cat, saying, "Why, yes, sir, but I have had cats whom I liked better than this;" and then, as if perceiving Hodge to be out of countenance, adding, "But he is a very fine cat, a very fine cat indeed."

This reminds me of the ludicrous account which he gave Mr. Langton of the despicable state of a young gentleman of good family. "Sir, when I heard of him last, he was running about town shooting cats." And then, in a sort of kindly reverie, he bethought

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 394, where Johnson gives a less amiable account of himself.—ED.]

himself of his own favourite cat, and said, "But Hodge shan't be shot; no, no, Hodge shall not be shot."

He thought Mr. Beauclerk made a shrewd and judicious remark to Mr. Langton, who, after having been for the first time in company with a well-known wit about town, was warmly admiring and praising him,—"See him again," said Beauclerk.

His respect for the hierarchy, and particularly the dignitaries of the church, has been more than once exhibited in the course of this work. Mr. Seward saw him presented to the Archbishop of York, and described his *bow to an* ARCHBISHOP as such a studied elaboration of homage, such an extension of limb, such a flexion of body, as have seldom or ever been equalled.

I cannot help mentioning with much regret, that by my own negligence I lost an opportunity of having the history of my family from its founder, Thomas Boswell, in 1504, recorded and illustrated by Johnson's pen. Such was his goodness to me, that when I presumed to solicit him for so great a favour, he was pleased to say, "Let me have all the materials you can collect, and I will do it both in Latin and English; then let it be printed, and copies of it be deposited in various places for security and preservation." I can now only do the best I can to make up for this loss, keeping my great master steadily in view. Family histories, like the *imagines majorum* of the ancients, excite to virtue; and I wish that they who really have blood, would be more careful to trace and ascertain its course. Some have affected to laugh at the history of the house of Yvery[1]: it would be well if many others would transmit their pedigrees to

[1] Written by John, Earl of Egmont, and printed (but not published) in 1764. —MALONE.

posterity, with the same accuracy and generous zeal with which the noble lord who compiled that work has honoured and perpetuated his ancestry.

On Thursday, April 10, I introduced to him, at his house in Bolt-court, the Honourable and Reverend William Stuart [1], son of the Earl of Bute; a gentleman truly worthy of being known to Johnson; being, with all the advantages of high birth, learning, travel, and elegant manners, an exemplary parish priest in every respect.

After some compliments on both sides, the tour which Johnson and I had made to the Hebrides was mentioned. JOHNSON. "I got an acquisition of more ideas by it than by any thing that I remember. I saw quite a different system of life." BOSWELL. "You would not like to make the same journey again?" JOHNSON. "Why no, sir; not the same: it is a tale told. Gravina, an Italian critick, observes, that every man desires to see that of which he has read; but no man desires to read an account of what he has seen: so much does description fall short of reality. Description only excites curiosity; seeing satisfies it. Other people may go and see the Hebrides." BOSWELL. "I should wish to go and see some country totally different from what I have been used to; such as Turkey, where religion and every thing else are different." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; there are two objects of curiosity,—the Christian world, and the Mahometan world. All the rest may be considered as barbarous." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, is the 'Turkish Spy' a genuine book?" JOHNSON. "No, sir. Mrs. Manley, in her life, says, that her

[1] At that time vicar of Luton, in Bedfordshire, where he lived for some years, and fully merited the character given of him in the text; he was afterwards Lord Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of Ireland—MALONE: [and died May, 1822, in a very strange way, having had poison, by mistake for medicine, administered to him by the hand of his lady.—ED.]

father wrote the first two volumes: and in another book, 'Dunton's[1] Life and Errours,' we find that the rest was written by one Sault, at two guineas a sheet, under the direction of Dr. Midgeley[2]."

BOSWELL. "This has been a very factious reign, owing to the too great indulgence of government." JOHNSON. "*I* think so, sir. What at first was lenity, grew timidity. Yet this is reasoning *à posteriori*, and may not be just. Supposing a few had at first been punished, I believe faction would have been crushed; but it might have been said, that it was a sanguinary reign. A man cannot tell *à priori* what will be best for government to do. This reign has been very unfortunate. We have had an unsuccessful war; but that does not prove that we have been ill governed. One side or other must prevail in war, as one or other must win at play. When we beat Louis, we were not better governed; nor were the French better governed when Louis beat us."

On Saturday, April 12, I visited him, in company with Mr. Windham, of Norfolk, whom, though a whig, he highly valued. One of the best things he ever said was to this gentleman; who, before he set out for Ireland as secretary to Lord Northington, when lord lieutenant, expressed to the sage some modest and virtuous doubts, whether he could bring himself to practise those arts which it is supposed a person in that situation has occasion to employ. "Don't be afraid, sir," said Johnson, with a pleasant smile; "you will soon make a very pretty rascal."

[1] [John Dunton was a mad bookseller.—ED.]

[2] "The Turkish Spy" was pretended to have been written originally in Arabick; from Arabick translated into Italian, and thence into English. The real author of the work, which was in fact originally written in Italian, was I. P. Marana, a Genoese, who died at Paris in 1693. John Dunton, in his life, says, that "Mr. *William Bradshaw* received from Dr. Midgeley forty shillings a sheet for writing part of the 'Turkish Spy;' but I do not find that he any where mentions *Sault* as engaged in that work."—MALONE.

He talked to-day a good deal of the wonderful extent and variety of London, and observed, that men of curious inquiry might see in it such modes of life as very few could even imagine. He in particular recommended to us to *explore Wapping*, which we resolved to do [1].

Mr. Lowe, the painter, who was with him, was very much distressed that a large picture which he had painted was refused to be received into the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. Mrs. Thrale knew Johnson's character so superficially, as to represent him as unwilling to do small acts of benevolence; and mentions, in particular, that he would hardly take the trouble to write a letter in favour of his friends. The truth, however, is that he was remarkable, in an extraordinary degree, for what she denies to him; and, above all, for this very sort of kindness, writing letters for those to whom his solicitations might be of service. He now gave Mr. Lowe the following, of which I was diligent enough, with his permission, to take copies at the next coffee-house, while Mr. Windham was so good as to stay by me.

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"12th April, 1783.

"SIR,—Mr. Lowe considers himself as cut off from all credit and all hope by the rejection of his picture from the Exhibition. Upon this work he has exhausted all his powers, and suspended all his expectations: and, certainly, to be refused an opportunity of taking the opinion of the publick, is in itself a very great hardship. It is to be condemned without a trial.

"If you could procure the revocation of this incapacitating edict, you would deliver an unhappy man from great affliction. The council has sometimes reversed its own determination; and

[1] We accordingly carried our scheme into execution, in October, 1792; but whether from that uniformity which has in modern times, in a great degree, spread through every part of the metropolis, or from our want of sufficient exertion, we were disappointed.—BOSWELL.

I hope that, by your interposition, this luckless picture may be got admitted. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. BARRY.

"12th April, 1783.

"SIR,—Mr. Lowe's exclusion from the Exhibition gives him more trouble than you and the other gentlemen of the council could imagine or intend. He considers disgrace and ruin as the inevitable consequence of your determination.

"He says, that some pictures have been received after rejection; and if there be any such precedent, I earnestly entreat that you will use your interest in his favour. Of his work I can say nothing; I pretend not to judge of painting, and this picture I never saw; but I conceive it extremely hard to shut out any man from the possibility of success; and therefore I repeat my request that you will propose the re-consideration of Mr. Lowe's case; and if there be any among the council with whom my name can have any weight, be pleased to communicate to them the desire of, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Such intercession was too powerful to be resisted; and Mr. Lowe's performance was admitted at Somerset-place. The subject, as I recollect, was the Deluge, at that point of time when the water was verging to the top of the last uncovered mountain. Near to the spot was seen the last of the antediluvian race, exclusive of those who were saved in the ark of Noah. This was one of those giants, then the inhabitants of the earth, who had still strength to swim, and with one of his hands held aloft his infant child. Upon the small remaining dry spot appeared a famished lion, ready to spring at the child and devour it. Mr. Lowe told me that Johnson said to him, "Sir, your picture is noble and probable." "A compliment, indeed," said Mr. Lowe, "from a man who cannot lie, and cannot be mistaken."

About this time he wrote to Mrs. Lucy Porter, mentioning his bad health, and that he intended a visit to Lichfield. "It is," says he, "with no great

expectation of amendment that I make every year a journey into the country; but it is pleasant to visit those whose kindness has been often experienced."

On April 18 (being Good Friday), I found him at breakfast, in his usual manner upon that day, drinking tea without milk, and eating a cross bun to prevent faintness; we went to St. Clement's church, as formerly. When we came home from church, he placed himself on one of the stone seats at his garden door, and I took the other, and thus in the open air, and in a placid frame of mind, he talked away very easily. JOHNSON. "Were I a country gentleman I should not be very hospitable; I should not have crowds in my house." BOSWELL. "Sir Alexander Dick tells me that he remembers having a thousand people in a year to dine at his house; that is, reckoning each person as one, each time that he dined there." JOHNSON. "That, sir, is about three a day." BOSWELL. "How your statement lessens the idea!" JOHNSON. "That, sir, is the good of counting. It brings every thing to a certainty, which before floated in the mind indefinitely." BOSWELL. "But *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est*; one is sorry to have this diminished." JOHNSON. "Sir, you should not allow yourself to be delighted with errour." BOSWELL. "Three a day seem but few." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, he who entertains three a day, does very liberally. And if there is a large family, the poor entertain those three, for they eat what the poor would get: there must be superfluous meat; it must be given to the poor, or thrown out." BOSWELL. "I observe in London, that the poor go about and gather bones, which I understand are manufactured." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; they boil them, and extract a grease from them for greasing wheels and other purposes. Of the best pieces they make a mock

ivory, which is used for hafts to knives, and various other things; the coarser pieces they burn and pound, and sell the ashes." BOSWELL. "For what purpose, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, for making a furnace for the chemists for melting iron. A paste made of burnt bones will stand a stronger heat than any thing else. Consider, sir, if you are to melt iron, you cannot line your pot with brass, because it is softer than iron, and would melt sooner; nor with iron, for though malleable iron is harder than cast-iron, yet it would not do; but a paste of burnt bones will not melt." BOSWELL. "Do you know, sir, I have discovered a manufacture to a great extent, of what you only piddle at—scraping and drying the peel of oranges[1]? At a place in Newgate-street there is a prodigious quantity prepared, which they sell to the distillers." JOHNSON. "Sir, I believe they make a higher thing out of them than a spirit; they make what is called orange-butter, the oil of the orange inspissated, which they mix perhaps with common pomatum, and make it fragrant. The oil does not fly off in the drying."

BOSWELL. "I wish to have a good walled garden." JOHNSON. "I don't think it would be worth the expense to you. We compute, in England, a park-wall at a thousand pounds a mile; now a garden-wall must cost at least as much. You intend your trees should grow higher than a deer will leap. Now let us see; for a hundred pounds you could only have forty-four square yards[2], which is very little; for two

[1] It is suggested to me by an anonymous annotator on my work, that the reason why Dr. Johnson collected the peels of squeezed oranges may be found in the 358th Letter in Mrs. Piozzi's Collection, where it appears that he recommended "dried orange-peel, finely powdered," as a medicine.—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 205, *note*.—ED.]

[2] [The Bishop of Ferns observes, that Mr. Boswell here mistakes forty-four *square yards* for forty-four *yards square*, and thus makes Johnson talk nonsense. What Johnson probably said was this: 1760 yards of wall cost a thousand pounds; therefore, one hundred and seventy-six yards will cost a hundred pounds.

hundred pounds you may have eighty-four square yards, which is very well. But when will you get the value of two hundred pounds of walls, in fruit, in your climate? No, sir; such contention with nature is not worth while. I would plant an orchard, and have plenty of such fruit as ripen well in your country. My friend, Dr. Madden, of Ireland, said, that 'In an orchard there should be enough to eat, enough to lay up, enough to be stolen, and enough to rot upon the ground.' Cherries are an early fruit; you may have them; and you may have the early apples and pears." BOSWELL. "We cannot have nonpareils." JOHNSON. "Sir, you can no more have nonpareils than you can have grapes." BOSWELL. "We have them, sir; but they are very bad." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, never try to have a thing merely to show that you *cannot* have it. From ground that would let for forty shillings you may have a large orchard; and you see it costs you only forty shillings. Nay, you may graze the ground when the trees are grown up; you cannot, while they are young." BOSWELL. "Is not a good garden a very common thing in England, sir?" JOHNSON. "Not so common, sir, as you imagine. In Lincolnshire there is hardly an orchard; in Staffordshire very little fruit." BOSWELL. "Has Langton no orchard?" JOHNSON. "No, sir." BOSWELL. "How so, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, from the general negligence of the county. He has it not, because nobody else has it." BOSWELL. "A hothouse is a certain thing; I may have that." JOHNSON. "A hothouse is pretty certain; but you must first build

One hundred and seventy-six yards will enclose a garden—not of forty-four *square yards*, which would be a small closet—but of forty-four *yards square*, nearly half an acre. Of course, its double will well enclose a garden of eighty-*eight* yards square (eighty-*four* is either a misprint or an additional error), and that, as Johnson remarks, is very well, for it would be above an acre and a half.—ED.]

it, then you must keep fires in it, and you must have a gardener to take care of it." BOSWELL. "But if I have a gardener at any rate?" JOHNSON. "Why, yes." BOSWELL. "I'd have it near my house; there is no need to have it in the orchard." JOHNSON. "Yes, I'd have it near my house. I would plant a great many currants; the fruit is good, and they make a pretty sweetmeat."

I record this minute detail, which some may think trifling, in order to show clearly how this great man, whose mind could grasp such large and extensive subjects, as he has shown in his literary labours, was yet well-informed in the common affairs of life, and loved to illustrate them.

Mr. Walker, the celebrated master of elocution[1], came in, and then we went up stairs into the study. I asked him if he had taught many clergymen. JOHNSON. "I hope not." WALKER. "I have taught only one, and he is the best reader I ever heard, not by my teaching, but by his own natural talents." JOHNSON. "Were he the best reader in the world, I would not have it told that he was taught." Here was one of his peculiar prejudices. Could it be any disadvantage to the clergyman to have it known that he was taught an easy and graceful delivery? BOSWELL. "Will you not allow, sir, that a man may be taught to read well?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, so far as to read better than he might do without being taught, yes. Formerly it was supposed that there was no difference in reading, but that one read as well as another." BOSWELL. "It is wonderful to see old Sheridan as enthusiastick about oratory as ever." WALKER. "His enthusiasm as to what ora-

[1] [He published several works on elocution and pronunciation, and died August 1, 1807, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.—ED.]

tory will do, may be too great: but he reads well." JOHNSON. "He reads well, but he reads low; and you know it is much easier to read low than to read high; for when you read high, you are much more limited, your loudest note can be but one, and so the variety is less in proportion to the loudness. Now some people have occasion to speak to an extensive audience, and must speak loud to be heard." WALKER. "The art is to read strong, though low."

Talking of the origin of language:—JOHNSON. "It must have come by inspiration. A thousand, nay a million of children could not invent a language. While the organs are pliable, there is not understanding enough to form a language; by the time that there is understanding enough, the organs are become stiff. We know that after a certain age we cannot learn to pronounce a new language. No foreigner, who comes to England when advanced in life, ever pronounces English tolerably well; at least such instances are very rare. When I maintain that language must have come by inspiration, I do not mean that inspiration is required for rhetorick, and all the beauties of language; for when once man has language, we can conceive that he may gradually form modifications of it. I mean only that inspiration seems to me to be necessary to give man the faculty of speech; to inform him that he may have speech; which I think he could no more find out without inspiration, than cows or hogs would think of such a faculty." WALKER. "Do you think, sir, that there are any perfect synonymes in any language?" JOHNSON. "Originally there were not: but by using words negligently, or in poetry, one word comes to be confounded with another."

He talked of Dr. Dodd. "A friend of mine," said

he, "came to me and told me, that a lady[1] wished to have Dr. Dodd's picture in a bracelet, and asked me for a motto. I said, I could think of no better than *Currat Lex*. I was very willing to have him pardoned, that is, to have the sentence changed to transportation: but, when he was once hanged, I did not wish he should be made a saint."

Mrs. Burney, wife of his friend, Dr. Burney, came in, and he seemed to be entertained with her conversation.

Garrick's funeral was talked of as extravagantly expensive. Johnson, from his dislike to exaggeration, would not allow that it was distinguished by an extraordinary pomp. "Were there not six horses to each coach?" said Mrs. Burney. JOHNSON. "Madam, there were no more six horses than six phœnixes."

Mrs. Burney wondered that some very beautiful new buildings should be erected in Moorfields, in so shocking a situation as between Bedlam and St. Luke's Hospital; and said she could not live there. JOHNSON. "Nay, madam, you see nothing there to hurt you. You no more think of madness by having windows that look to Bedlam, than you think of death by having windows that look to a churchyard." MRS. BURNEY. "We may look to a churchyard, sir; for it is right that we should be kept in mind of death." JOHNSON. "Nay, madam, if you go to that, it is right that we should be kept in mind of madness, which is occasioned by too much indulgence of imagination. I think a very moral use may be made of these new buildings: I would have those who have heated imaginations live there, and take warning." MRS. BURNEY. "But, sir, many of the

[1] [The Editor has been told that the lady was Dr. Dodd's relict; but if this was so, Dr. Johnson could not have been aware of it, as he could hardly have disapproved of *her* wearing his picture, and would surely not have insulted *her* by such an answer.—ED.]

poor people that are mad have become so from disease, or from distressing events. It is, therefore, not their fault, but their misfortune; and, therefore, to think of them is a melancholy consideration."

Time passed on in conversation till it was too late for the service of the church at three o'clock. I took a walk, and left him alone for some time; then returned, and we had coffee and conversation again by ourselves.

I stated the character of a noble friend of mine as a curious case for his opinion [1]:—"He is the most inexplicable man to me that I ever knew. Can you explain him, sir? He is, I really believe, noble-minded, generous, and princely. But his most intimate friends may be separated from him for years, without his ever asking a question concerning them. He will meet them with a formality, a coldness, a stately indifference; but when they come close to him, and fairly engage him in conversation, they find him as easy, pleasant, and kind as they could wish. One then supposes that what is so agreeable will soon be renewed; but stay away from him for half a year, and he will neither call on you, nor send to inquire about you." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I cannot ascertain his character exactly, as I do not know him; but I should not like to have such a man for my friend. He may love study, and wish not to be interrupted by his friends; *Amici fures temporis.* He may be a frivolous man, and be so much occupied with petty pursuits that he may not want friends. Or he may have a notion that there is dignity in appearing indifferent, while he in fact may not be more indifferent at his heart than another."

We went to evening prayers at St. Clement's, at seven, and then parted.

[Probably Lord Mount Stuart, afterwards first Marquis of Bute.—ED.]

[The reader will recollect, that in the year 1775, when Dr. Johnson visited France, he was kindly entertained by the English Benedictine monks at Paris[1]. One of that body, the Rev. James Compton, in the course of some conversation with him at that time, asked him, if any of them should become converts to the protestant faith, and should visit England, whether they might hope for a friendly reception from him: to which he warmly replied, "that he should receive such a convert most cordially." In consequence of this conversation, Mr. Compton, a few years afterwards, having some doubts concerning the religion in which he had been bred, was induced, by reading the 110th Number of "The Rambler," (on REPENTANCE,) to consider the subject more deeply; and the result of his inquiries was, a determination to become a protestant[2]. With this view, in the summer of 1782, he returned to his native country, from whence he had been absent from his sixth to his thirty-fifth year; and on his arrival in London, very scantily provided with the means of subsistence, he immediately repaired to Bolt-court, to visit Dr. Johnson; and having informed him of his desire to be admitted into the church of England, for this purpose solicited his aid to procure for him an introduction to the bishop of London, Dr. Lowth. At the time of his first visit, Johnson was so much indisposed, that he could allow him only a short conversation of a few minutes; but he desired him to call again in the course of the following week. When Mr. Compton visited him a second time, he was per- Malone.

[1] See vol. iii. p. 364.—MALONE.

[2] [Mr. Markland observes, that in the very paper of the Rambler, to which Mr. Compton's conversion is attributed, is to be found a passage, by no means in principle hostile to the fasts and other penitential observances practised by the Romish church. It is, indeed, to be hoped and believed that Mr. Compton's conversion rested upon deeper grounds than the observations in the Rambler.—ED.]

Malone. fectly recovered from his indisposition; received him with the utmost cordiality; and not only undertook the management of the business in which his friendly interposition had been requested, but with great kindness exerted himself in this gentleman's favour, with a view to his future subsistence, and immediately supplied him with the means of present support.

Finding that the proposed introduction to the bishop of London had from some accidental causes been deferred, lest Mr. Compton, who then lodged at Highgate, should suppose himself neglected, he wrote him the following note:

"TO THE REVEREND MR. COMPTON.

"6th October, 1782.

"SIR,—I have directed Dr. Vyse's letter to be sent to you, that you may know the situation of your business. Delays are incident to all affairs; but there appears nothing in your case of either superciliousness or neglect. Dr. Vyse seems to wish you well. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Compton having, by Johnson's advice, quitted Highgate, and settled in London, had now more frequent opportunities of visiting his friend, and profiting by his conversation and advice. Still, however, his means of subsistence being very scanty, Dr. Johnson kindly promised to afford him a decent maintenance, until by his own exertions he should be able to obtain a livelihood; which benevolent offer he accepted, and lived entirely at Johnson's expense till the end of January, 1783; in which month, having previously been introduced to Bishop Lowth, he was received into our communion in St. James's parish-church. In the following April, the place of undermaster of St. Paul's school having become vacant, his friendly protector did him a more essential service, by writing the following letter in his favour, to the

Mercers' Company, in whom the appointment of the under-master lay: Malone.

"TO THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF THE MERCERS.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 19th April, 1783.

"GENTLEMEN,—At the request of the Reverend Mr. James Compton, who now solicits your votes to be elected under-master of St. Paul's school, I testify, with great sincerity, that he is, in my opinion, a man of abilities sufficient, and more than sufficient, for the duties of the office for which he is a candidate. I am, gentlemen, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Though this testimony in Mr. Compton's favour was not attended with immediate success, the Reverend Mr. Edwards, who had been bred in St. Paul's school, having been elected to fill the vacant office, yet Johnson's kindness was not without effect; and the result of his recommendation shows how highly he was estimated in the great commercial city of London; for his letter procured Mr. Compton so many well-wishers in the respectable company of mercers, that he was honoured, by the favour of several of its members, with more applications to teach Latin and French than he could find time to attend to. In 1796, the Reverend Mr. Gilbert, one of his majesty's French chaplains, having accepted a living in Guernsey, nominated Mr. Compton as his substitute at the French chapel of St. James's; which appointment, in April, 1811, he relinquished for a better in the French chapel at Bethnal Green. By the favour of Dr. Porteus, the late excellent Bishop of London, he was also appointed, in 1802, chaplain of the Dutch chapel at St. James's; a station which he still holds [1].]

[1] The preceding account of this gentleman's conversion, and of Johnson's subsequent liberality to him, would, doubtless, have been embodied by Mr. Boswell in his work, had he been apprized of the circumstances above related, which add one more proof to those which he has accumulated of Johnson's uniform and unbounded benevolence.—MALONE.

On Sunday, April 20, being Easter-day, after attending solemn service at St. Paul's, I came to Dr. Johnson, and found Mr. Lowe, the painter, sitting with him. Mr. Lowe mentioned the great number of new buildings of late in London, yet that Dr. Johnson had observed, that the number of inhabitants was not increased. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the bills of mortality prove that no more people die now than formerly; so it is plain no more live. The register of births proves nothing, for not one-tenth of the people of London are born there." BOSWELL. "I believe, sir, a great many of the children born in London die early." JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir." BOSWELL. "But those who do live are as stout and strong people as any. Dr. Price says, they must be naturally strong to get through." JOHNSON. "That is system, sir. A great traveller observes, that it is said there are no weak or deformed people among the Indians; but he, with much sagacity, assigns the reason of this, which is, that the hardship of their life as hunters and fishers does not allow weak or diseased children to grow up. Now had I been an Indian I must have died early; my eyes would not have served me to get food. I, indeed, now could fish, give me English tackle; but had I been an Indian, I must have starved, or they would have knocked me on the head, when they saw I could do nothing." BOSWELL. "Perhaps, they would have taken care of you; we are told they are fond of oratory,—you would have talked to them." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, I should not have lived long enough to be fit to talk; I should have been dead before I was ten years old. Depend upon it, sir, a savage, when he is hungry, will not carry about with him a looby of nine years old, who cannot help himself. They have no affection, sir." BOSWELL. "I believe na-

tural affection, of which we hear so much, is very small." JOHNSON. "Sir, natural affection is nothing; but affection from principle and established duty is sometimes wonderfully strong." LOWE. "A hen, sir, will feed her chickens in preference to herself." JOHNSON. "But we don't know that the hen is hungry; let the hen be fairly hungry, and I'll warrant she'll peck the corn herself. A cock, I believe, will feed hens instead of himself: but we don't know that the cock is hungry." BOSWELL. "And that, sir, is not from affection, but gallantry. But some of the Indians have affection." JOHNSON. "Sir, that they help some of their children is plain; for some of them live, which they could not do without being helped."

I dined with him; the company were Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Desmoulins, and Mr. Lowe. He seemed not to be well, talked little, grew drowsy soon after dinner, and retired; upon which I went away.

Having next day gone to Mr. Burke's seat in the country, from whence I was recalled by an express, that a near relation of mine had killed his antagonist in a duel, and was himself dangerously wounded, I saw little of Dr. Johnson till Monday, April 28, when I spent a considerable part of the day with him, and introduced the subject which then chiefly occupied my mind. JOHNSON. "I do not see, sir, that fighting is absolutely forbidden in scripture; I see revenge forbidden, but not self-defence." BOSWELL. "The quakers say it is.—'Unto him that smiteth thee on one cheek, offer him also the other.'" JOHNSON. "But stay, sir; the text is meant only to have the effect of moderating passion; it is plain that we are not to take it in a literal sense. We see this from the context, where there are other recommendations; which, I warrant you, the quaker will not take lite-

rally; as, for instance, 'From him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away.' Let a man whose credit is bad come to a quaker, and say, 'Well, sir, lend me a hundred pounds;' he 'll find him as unwilling as any other man. No, sir; a man may shoot the man who invades his character, as he may shoot him who attempts to break into his house[1]. So, in 1745, my friend, Tom Cumming, the quaker, said he would not fight, but he would drive an ammunition cart; and we know that the quakers have sent flannel waistcoats to our soldiers, to enable them to fight better." BOSWELL. "When a man is the aggressor, and by ill usage forces on a duel in which he is killed, have we not little ground to hope that he is gone to a state of happiness?" JOHNSON. "Sir, we are not to judge determinately of the state in which a man leaves this life. He may in a moment have repented effectually, and it is possible may have been accepted of God. There is in 'Camden's Remains' an epitaph upon a very wicked man, who was killed by a fall from his horse, in which he is supposed to say,

'Between the stirrup and the ground,
I mercy ask'd, I mercy found[2].'"

[1] I think it necessary to caution my readers against concluding that, in this or any other conversation of Dr. Johnson, they have his serious and deliberate opinion on the subject of duelling. In my Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, third edit. p. 386, it appears that he made this frank confession: "Nobody, at times, talks more laxly than I do;" and ibid. p. 231, "He fairly owned he could not explain the rationality of duelling." We may, therefore, infer, that he could not think that justifiable, which seems so inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel. At the same time, it must be confessed, that, from the prevalent notions of honour, a gentleman who receives a challenge is reduced to a dreadful alternative. A remarkable instance of this is furnished by a clause in the will of the late Colonel Thomas, of the Guards, written the night before he fell in a duel, September 3, 1783: "In the first place, I commit my soul to Almighty God, in hopes of his mercy and pardon for the irreligious step I now (in compliance with the unwarrantable customs of this wicked world) put myself under the necessity of taking."—BOSWELL.

[2] In repeating this epitaph, Johnson improved it. The original runs thus:

"*Betwixt* the stirrup and the ground,
Mercy I ask'd, mercy I found."—MALONE.

BOSWELL. "Is not the expression in the burial-service,—'in the *sure* and *certain* hope of a blessed[1] resurrection'—too strong to be used indiscriminately, and, indeed, sometimes when those over whose bodies it is said have been notoriously profane?" JOHNSON. "It is sure and certain *hope*, sir, not *belief*." I did not insist further; but cannot help thinking that less positive words would be more proper[2].

Talking of a man who was grown very fat, so as to be incommoded with corpulency, he said, "He eats too much, sir." BOSWELL. "I don't know, sir; you will see one man fat, who eats moderately, and another lean, who eats a great deal." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, whatever may be the quantity that a man eats, it is plain that if he is too fat, he has eaten more than he should have done. One man may have a digestion that consumes food better than common; but it is certain that solidity is increased by putting something to it." BOSWELL. "But may not solids swell and be distended?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, they may swell and be distended; but that is not fat."

[1] [Mr. Boswell, quoting from memory, has interpolated the word "blessed." The words are "in sure and certain hope of *the* resurrection," &c. &c. L'Estrange, in his "Alliance of Divine Offices," p. 302, observes "these words import the faith of the *congregation* then present in the article of the resurrection. The plural, '*our* vile bodies,' excludes the restraint to a singular number." The reformed liturgies have uniformly employed the same cautious language. In one of the prayers used in the burial service, in the first book of Edward VI. the following passage occurs: "We give thee hearty thanks for this, thy servant, whom thou hast delivered, &c. &c. And, *as we trust*, hast brought his soul into sure consolation of rest."—J. H. MARKLAND.]

[2] Upon this objection the Reverend Mr. Ralph Churton, fellow of Brazennose College, Oxford, has favoured me with the following satisfactory observation: "The passage in the burial-service does not mean the resurrection of the person interred, but the general resurrection; it is in sure and certain hope of *the* resurrection; not *his* resurrection. Where the deceased is really spoken of, the expression is very different,—'as our hope is this our brother doth,' [rest in Christ;] a mode of speech consistent with every thing but absolute certainty that the person departed doth *not* rest in Christ, which no one can be assured of without immediate revelation from Heaven. In the first of these places, also, 'eternal life' does not necessarily mean eternity of bliss, but merely the eternity of the state, whether in happiness or in misery, to ensue upon the resurrection; which is probably the sense of 'the life everlasting,' in the Apostles' Creed. See Wheatly and Bennet on the Common Prayer."—BOSWELL.

We talked of the accusation against a gentleman[1] for supposed delinquencies in India. JOHNSON. "What foundation there is for accusation I know not, but they will not get at him. Where bad actions are committed at so great a distance, a delinquent can obscure the evidence till the scent becomes cold; there is a cloud between, which cannot be penetrated: therefore all distant power is bad. I am clear that the best plan for the government of India is a despotick governour; for if he be a good man, it is evidently the best government; and supposing him to be a bad man, it is better to have one plunderer than many. A governour whose power is checked lets others plunder, that he himself may be allowed to plunder; but if despotick, he sees that the more he lets others plunder, the less there will be for himself, so he restrains them; and though he himself plunders, the country is a gainer, compared with being plundered by numbers."

I mentioned the very liberal payment which had been received for reviewing; and as evidence of this, that it had been proved in a trial, that Dr. Shebbeare had received six guineas a sheet for that kind of literary labour. JOHNSON. "Sir, he might get six guineas for a particular sheet, but not *communibus sheetibus*." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, by a sheet of review, is it meant that it shall be all of the writer's own composition? or are extracts, made from the book reviewed, deducted?" JOHNSON. "No, sir; it is a sheet, no matter of what." BOSWELL. "I think that is not reasonable." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, it is. A man will more easily write a sheet all his own, than read an octavo volume to get extracts."

[1] [Either Sir Elijah Impey or Mr. Warren Hastings.—ED.]

To one of Johnson's wonderful fertility of mind, I believe writing was really easier than reading and extracting; but with ordinary men the case is very different. A great deal, indeed, will depend upon the care and judgment with which extracts are made. I can suppose the operation to be tedious and difficult; but in many instances we must observe crude morsels cut out of books as if at random; and when a large extract is made from one place, it surely may be done with very little trouble. One, however, I must acknowledge, might be led, from the practice of reviewers, to suppose that they take a pleasure in original writing; for we often find, that instead of giving an accurate account of what has been done by the authour whose work they are reviewing, which is surely the proper business of a literary journal, they produce some plausible and ingenious conceits of their own, upon the topicks which have been discussed.

Upon being told that old Mr. Sheridan, indignant at the neglect of his oratorical plans, had threatened to go to America: JOHNSON. "I hope he will go to America." BOSWELL. "The Americans don't want oratory." JOHNSON. "But we can want Sheridan."

On Monday, April 28, I found him at home in the morning, and Mr. Seward with him. Horace having been mentioned: BOSWELL. "There is a great deal of thinking in his works. One finds there almost every thing but religion." SEWARD. "He speaks of his returning to it, in his Ode *Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens.*" JOHNSON. "Sir, he was not in earnest; this was merely poetical." BOSWELL. "There are, I am afraid, many people who have no religion at all." SEWARD. "And sensible people too." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, not sensible in that respect. There must be either a natural or a moral

stupidity, if one lives in a total neglect of so very important a concern." SEWARD. "I wonder that there should be people without religion." JOHNSON. "Sir, you need not wonder at this, when you consider how large a proportion of almost every man's life is passed without thinking of it. I myself was for some years totally regardless of religion. It had dropped out of my mind. It was at an early part of my life. Sickness brought it back, and I hope I have never lost it since." BOSWELL. "My dear sir, what a man must you have been without religion! Why you must have gone on drinking, and swearing, and —" JOHNSON (with a smile). "I drank enough, and swore enough, to be sure." SEWARD. "One should think that sickness and the view of death would make more men religious." JOHNSON. "Sir, they do not know how to go about it: they have not the first notion. A man who has never had religion before, no more grows religious when he is sick, than a man who has never learnt figures can count when he has need of calculation."

I mentioned a worthy friend of ours whom we valued much, but observed that he was too ready to introduce religious discourse upon all occasions[1]. JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir, he will introduce religious discourse without seeing whether it will end in instruction and improvement, or produce some profane jest. He would introduce it in the company of Wilkes, and twenty more such."

I mentioned Dr. Johnson's excellent distinction between liberty of conscience and liberty of teaching. JOHNSON. "Consider, sir; if you have children whom you wish to educate in the principles of the church of England, and there comes a Quaker who

[1] [Mr. Langton: see *ante*, v. ii. p. 239 and 323, and v. iv. p. 37.—ED.]

tries to pervert them to his principles, you would drive away the Quaker. You would not trust to the predomination of right, which you believe is in your opinions; you will keep wrong out of their heads. Now the vulgar are the children of the state. If any one attempts to teach them doctrines contrary to what the state approves, the magistrate may and ought to restrain him." SEWARD. "Would you restrain private conversation, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it is difficult to say where private conversation begins, and where it ends. If we three should discuss even the great question concerning the existence of a Supreme Being by ourselves, we should not be restrained; for that would be to put an end to all improvement. But if we should discuss it in the presence of ten boarding-school girls, and as many boys, I think the magistrate would do well to put us in the stocks, to finish the debate there."

Lord Hailes had sent him a present of a curious little printed poem, on repairing the university of Aberdeen, by David *Malloch*, which he thought would please Johnson, as affording clear evidence that Mallet had appeared even as a literary character by the name of *Malloch*; his changing which to one of softer sound had given Johnson occasion to introduce him into his Dictionary, under the article *Alias*[1]. This piece was, I suppose, one of Mallet's first essays. It is preserved in his works, with several variations. Johnson having read aloud, from the begin-

[1] Malloch, as Mr. Bindley observes to me, "continued to write his name thus, *after he came to London*. His verses prefixed to the second edition of Thomson's 'Winter' are so subscribed, and so are his Letters written in London, and published a few years ago in 'The European Magazine;' but he soon afterwards adopted the alteration to Mallet, for he is so called in the list of subscribers to Savage's Miscellanies, printed in 1726; and thenceforward uniformly *Mallet*, in all his writings."—MALONE. A notion has been entertained, that no such exemplification of *Alias* is to be found in Johnson's Dictionary, and that the whole story was waggishly fabricated by Wilkes in the "North Briton." The real fact is, that it is not to be found in the folio or quarto editions, but was added by Johnson in his own *octavo* abridgment, in 1756.—J. BOSWELL.

ning of it, where there were some common-place assertions as to the superiority of ancient times:—"How false," said he, "is all this, to say that 'in ancient times learning was not a disgrace to a peer, as it is now!' In ancient times a peer was as ignorant as any one else. He would have been angry to have it thought he could write his name. Men in ancient times dared to stand forth with a degree of ignorance with which nobody would now dare to stand forth. I am always angry when I hear ancient times praised at the expense of modern times. There is now a great deal more learning in the world than there was formerly; for it is universally diffused. You have, perhaps, no man who knows as much Greek and Latin as Bentley; no man who knows as much mathematicks as Newton: but you have many more men who know Greek and Latin, and who know mathematicks."

Letters, vol. ii. p. 255.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, May-day, 1783.

"For some days after your departure I was pretty well; but I have begun to languish again, and last night was very tedious and oppressive. I excused myself to-day from dining with General Paoli, where I love to dine; but I was griped by the talons of necessity.

"On Saturday I dined, as is usual, at the opening of the Exhibition. Our company was splendid, whether more numerous than at any former time I know not. Our tables seem always full. On Monday, if I am told truth, were received at the door one hundred and ninety pounds, for the admission of three thousand eight hundred spectators. Supposing the show open ten hours, and the spectators staying one with another each an hour, the room never had fewer than three hundred and eighty justling against each other. Poor Lowe met some discouragement; but I interposed for him, and prevailed.

"Mr. Barry's exhibition was opened the same day, and a book is published to recommend it; which, if you read it, you will find decorated with some satirical pictures of Sir Joshua

Reynolds and others. I have not escaped. You must, however, think with some esteem of Barry for the comprehension of his design."

"TO MRS. THRALE.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 257.

"London, 8th May, 1783.

"I thought your letter long in coming. I suppose it is true that I looked but languid at the Exhibition, but have been worse since. Last Wednesday—the Wednesday of last week—I came home ill from Mr. Jodrel's, and after a tedious, oppressive, impatient night, sent an excuse to General Paoli, and took on Thursday two brisk catharticks and a dose of calomel. Little things do me no good. At night I was much better. Next day cathartick again, and the third day opium for my cough. I lived without flesh all the three days. The recovery was more than I expected. I went to church on Sunday quite at ease.

"The Exhibition prospers so much that Sir Joshua says it will maintain the academy. He estimates the probable amount at three thousand pounds. Steevens is of opinion that Croft's books will sell for near three times as much as they cost; which, however, is not more than might be expected.

"Favour me with a direction to Musgrave[1] of Ireland; I have a charitable office to propose to him. Is he knight or baronet?

"My present circle of enjoyment is as narrow for me as the Circus [at Bath] for Mrs. Montague. When I first settled in this neighbourhood I had Richardson and Lawrence and Mrs. Allen at hand. I had Mrs. Williams, then no bad companion; and Levett for a long time always to be had. If I now go out, I must go far for company, and at last come back to two sick and discontented women, who can hardly talk if they had any thing to say, and whose hatred of each other makes one great exercise of their faculties."]

On Thursday, 1st May, I visited him in the evening along with young Mr. Burke. He said, "It is strange that there should be so little reading in the

[1] [Sir Richard Musgrave, of Turin, in the county of Waterford, in Ireland, created a baronet in 1782. He published several political works, particularly a History of the Irish Rebellion in 1798; written with great asperity against the Roman Catholics, to whose tenets Sir Richard attributed that rebellion. He was for many years a member of the Irish parliament, and died in 1818.—Ed.]

world, and so much writing. People in general do not willingly read, if they can have any thing else to amuse them. There must be an external impulse; emulation, or vanity, or avarice. The progress which the understanding makes through a book has more pain than pleasure in it. Language is scanty and inadequate to express the nice gradations and mixtures of our feelings. No man reads a book of science from pure inclination. The books that we do read with pleasure are light compositions, which contain a quick succession of events. However, I have this year read all Virgil through. I read a book of the Æneid every night, so it was done in twelve nights, and I had a great delight in it. The Georgicks did not give me so much pleasure, except the fourth book. The Eclogues I have almost all by heart. I do not think the story of the Æneid interesting. I like the story of the Odyssey much better; and this not on account of the wonderful things which it contains; for there are wonderful things enough in the Æneid; —the ships of the Trojans turned to sea-nymphs,— the tree at Polydorus's tomb dropping blood. The story of the Odyssey is interesting as a great part of it is domestick. It has been said there is pleasure in writing, particularly in writing verses. I allow you may have pleasure from writing after it is over, if you have written well[1]; but you don't go willingly to it again. I know, when I have been writing verses, I have run my finger down the margin, to see how many I had made, and how few I had to make."

He seemed to be in a very placid humour; and although I have no note of the particulars of young Mr. Burke's conversation, it is but justice to mention in general, that it was such that Dr. Johnson said to

[1] Dum pingit, fruitur arte; postquam pinxerat, fruitur fructu artis.—SENECA. KEARNEY.

me afterwards, "He did very well indeed; I have a mind to tell his father[1]."

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"2d May, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—The gentleman who waits on you with this is Mr. Cruikshanks, who wishes to succeed his friend Dr. Hunter as professor of anatomy in the royal academy. His qualifications are very generally known, and it adds dignity to the institution that such men[2] are candidates. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

I have no minute of any interview with Johnson till Thursday, May 15th, when I find what follows: BOSWELL. "I wish much to be in parliament, sir." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, unless you come resolved to support any administration, you would be the worse for being in parliament, because you would be obliged to live more expensively." BOSWELL. "Perhaps, sir, I should be the less happy for being in parliament. I never would sell my vote, and I should be vexed if things went wrong." JOHNSON. "That's cant, sir. It would not vex you more in the House than in the gallery: publick affairs vex no man." BOSWELL. "Have not they vexed yourself a little, sir? Have not you been vexed by all the turbulence of this reign, and by that absurd vote of the house of commons, 'That the influence of the crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished?'" JOHNSON. "Sir, I have never slept an hour less, nor eat an ounce less meat. I would have knocked the factious dogs on the head, to be sure; but I was not

[1] [The fond partiality of his father (for such it must be admitted to have been) for the talents of Mr. Richard Burke is now well known. Mr. Burke is reported, with a mixture of personal and paternal pride, to have remarked how extraordinary it was that Lord Chatham, Lord Holland, and he should each have had a son so superior to their fathers.—ED.]

[2] Let it be remembered by those who accuse Dr. Johnson of illiberality, that both were *Scotchmen*.—BOSWELL.

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vexed." BOSWELL. "I declare, sir, upon my honour, I did imagine I was vexed, and took a pride in it; but it *was*, perhaps, cant; for I own I neither eat less nor slept less." JOHNSON. "My dear friend, clear your *mind* of cant. You may *talk* as other people do: you may say to a man, 'Sir, I am your humble servant.' You are *not* his most humble servant. You may say, 'These are bad times; it is a melancholy thing to be reserved to such times.' You don't mind the times. You tell a man, 'I am sorry you had such bad weather the last day of your journey, and were so much wet.' You don't care sixpence whether he is wet or dry. You may *talk* in this manner; it is a mode of talking in society: but don't *think* foolishly."

I talked of living in the country. JOHNSON. "Don't set up for what is called hospitality: it is a waste of time, and a waste of money: you are eaten up, and not the more respected for your liberality. If your house be like an inn, nobody cares for you. A man who stays a week with another makes him a slave for a week." BOSWELL. "But there are people, sir, who make their houses a home to their guests, and are themselves quite easy." JOHNSON. "Then, sir, home must be the same to the guests, and they need not come."

Here he discovered a notion common enough in persons not much accustomed to entertain company, that there must be a degree of elaborate attention, otherwise company will think themselves neglected; and such attention is no doubt very fatiguing. He proceeded: "I would not, however, be a stranger in my own country; I would visit my neighbours, and receive their visits; but I would not be in haste to return visits. If a gentleman comes to see me, I tell him he does me a great deal of honour. I do not go

to see him perhaps for ten weeks; then we are very complaisant to each other. No, sir, you will have much more influence by giving or lending money where it is wanted, than by hospitality."

On Saturday, 17th May, I saw him for a short time. Having mentioned that I had that morning been with old Mr. Sheridan, he remembered their former intimacy with a cordial warmth, and said to me, "Tell Mr. Sheridan I shall be glad to see him and shake hands with him." BOSWELL. "It is to me very wonderful that resentment should be kept up so long." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it is not altogether resentment that he does not visit me; it is partly falling out of the habit,—partly disgust, such as one has at a drug that has made him sick. Besides, he knows that I laugh at his oratory."

[Of Sheridan's Book on Oratory, Dr. Johnson said, "It is impossible to read it without feeling a perpetual elevation of hope, and a perpetual disappointment. If we should have a bad harvest this year, Sheridan would say it was owing to the neglect of oratory."] Gent. Mag. vol. lv. p. 289.

Another day I spoke of one of our friends, of whom he, as well as I, had a very high opinion. He expatiated in his praise; but added, "Sir, he is a cursed whig, a *bottomless* whig, as they all are now [1]."

I mentioned my expectations from the interest of an eminent person [2] then in power; adding, "But I have no claim but the claim of friendship: however, some people will go a great way from that motive." JOHNSON. "Sir, they will go all the way from that motive." A gentleman talked of retiring. "Never think of that," said Johnson. The gentleman urged,

[1] [Mr. Burke, who, however, proved himself, on the French Revolution, not to be a *bottomless* whig.—ED.]

[2] [Probably Lord Mountstuart. See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 317.—ED.]

"I should then do no ill." JOHNSON. "Nor no good either. Sir, it would be a civil suicide."

ED. [Mr. Boswell about this period was negotiating another dinner with Dr. Johnson and Mr. Wilkes at the house of the latter; but though Johnson had no objection, the dinner does not seem to have taken place.

Wilkes Corresp. vol. iv. p. 314.

"JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ. TO JOHN WILKES, ESQ.

"Wednesday, 21st May [1783].

"Mr. Boswell's compliments to Mr. Wilkes. He rejoices to find he is so much better as to be abroad. He finds that it would not be unpleasant to Dr. Johnson to dine at Mr. Wilkes's. The thing would be so curiously benignant, it were a pity it should not take place. Nobody but Mr. Boswell should be asked to meet the doctor. Mr. Boswell goes for Scotland on Friday the 30th. If then a card were sent to the doctor on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday without delay, it is to be hoped he would be fixed; and notice will be sent to Mr. Boswell."

Wilkes Corresp. vol. iv. p. 321.

"MR. BOSWELL TO MR. AND MISS WILKES.

"Mr. Boswell presents his best compliments to Mr. and Miss Wilkes; encloses Dr. Johnson's answer; and regrets much that so agreeable a meeting must be deferred till next year, as Mr. Boswell is to set out for Scotland in a few days. Hopes Mr. Wilkes will write to him there."

Enclosed.

"24th May, 1783.

"Dr. Johnson returns thanks to Mr. and Miss Wilkes for their kind invitation; but he is engaged for Tuesday to Sir Joshua Reynolds, and for Wednesday to Mr. Paradise."]

On Monday, May 26, I found him at tea, and the celebrated Miss Burney, the authour of "Evelina" and "Cecilia," with him. I asked if there would be any speakers in parliament, if there were no places to be obtained. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir. Why do you speak here? Either to instruct and entertain, which is a benevolent motive; or for distinction, which is a selfish motive." I mentioned "Cecilia."

JOHNSON (with an air of animated satisfaction). "Sir, if you talk of 'Cecilia,' talk on."

We talked of Mr. Barry's exhibition of his pictures. JOHNSON. "Whatever the hand may have done, the mind has done its part. There is a grasp of mind there which you find nowhere else [1]."

I asked whether a man naturally virtuous, or one who has overcome wicked inclinations, is the best. JOHNSON. "Sir, to *you*, the man who has overcome wicked inclinations is not the best. He has more merit to *himself*. I would rather trust my money to a man who has no hands, and so a physical impossibility to steal, than to a man of the most honest principles. There is a witty satirical story of Foote. He had a small bust of Garrick placed upon his bureau. 'You may be surprised,' said he, 'that I allow him to be so near my gold;—but you will observe he has no hands.'"

On Friday, May 29, being to set out for Scotland next morning, I passed a part of the day with him in more than usual earnestness, as his health was in a more precarious state than at any time when I had parted from him. He, however, was quick and lively, and critical, as usual. I mentioned one who was a very learned man. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, he has a great deal of learning; but it never lies straight. There is never one idea by the side of another; 'tis all entangled: and then he drives it so awkwardly upon conversation!"

I stated to him an anxious thought, by which a sincere Christian might be disturbed, even when conscious of having lived a good life, so far as is con-

[1] In Mr. Barry's printed analysis or description of these pictures, he speaks of Johnson's character in the highest terms.—BOSWELL. [Yet see what Johnson himself says on this point, in the conclusion of his Letter to Mrs. Thrale, of the 1st of May, *ante*, p. 99.—ED.]

sistent with human infirmity: he might fear that he should afterwards fall away, and be guilty of such crimes as would render all his former religion vain. Could there be, upon this awful subject, such a thing as balancing of accounts? Suppose a man who has led a good life for seven years commits an act of wickedness, and instantly dies; will his former good life have any effect in his favour? JOHNSON. "Sir, if a man has led a good life for seven years, and then is hurried by passion to do what is wrong, and is suddenly carried off, depend upon it he will have the reward of his seven years' good life: God will not take a catch of him. Upon this principle Richard Baxter believes that a suicide may be saved. 'If,' says he, 'it should be objected that what I maintain may encourage suicide, I answer, I am not to tell a lie to prevent it.'" BOSWELL. "But does not the text say, 'As the tree falls, so it must lie?'" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; as the tree falls: but,"—after a little pause —"that is meant as to the general state of the tree, not what is the effect of a sudden blast." In short, he interpreted the expression as referring to *condition*, not to *position*. The common notion, therefore, seems to be erroneous; and Shenstone's witty remark[1] on divines trying to give the tree a jerk upon a deathbed, to make it lie favourably, is not well founded.

I asked him what works of Richard Baxter's I should read. He said, "Read any of them; they are all good."

He said, "Get as much force of mind as you can. Live within your income. Always have something

[1] ["When a tree is falling, I have seen the labourers, by a trivial jerk with a rope, throw it upon the spot where they would wish it to lie. Divines understanding this text too literally, pretend, by a little interposition in the article of death, to regulate a person's everlasting happiness. I fancy the allusion will hardly countenance their presumption." *Shenstone's Works*, v. ii. p. 297.—ED.]

saved at the end of the year. Let your imports be more than your exports, and you'll never go far wrong."

I assured him, that in the extensive and various range of his acquaintance there never had been any one who had a more sincere respect and affection for him than I had. He said, "I believe it, sir. Were I in distress, there is no man to whom I should sooner come than to you. I should like to come and have a cottage in your park, toddle about, live mostly on milk, and be taken care of by Mrs. Boswell. She and I are good friends now; are we not?"

Talking of devotion, he said, "Though it be true that 'God dwelleth not in temples made with hands,' yet in this state of being our minds are more piously affected in places appropriated to divine worship, than in others. Some people have a particular room in their houses where they say their prayers; of which I do not disapprove, as it may animate their devotion."

He embraced me, and gave me his blessing, as usual when I was leaving him for any length of time. I walked from his door to-day with a fearful apprehension of what might happen before I returned.

"TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM WINDHAM.

"London, 31st May, 1783.

"SIR,—The bringer of this letter is the father of Miss Philips[1], a singer, who comes to try her voice on the stage at Dublin.

"Mr. Philips is one of my old friends; and as I am of opinion that neither he nor his daughter will do any thing that can disgrace their benefactors, I take the liberty of entreating you to countenance and protect them so far as may be suitable to your station[2] and character, and shall consider myself as

[1] Now the celebrated Mrs. Crouch.—BOSWELL. [She died in October, 1805, æt. 45.—ED.]

[2] Mr. Windham was at this time in Dublin, secretary to the Earl of Northington, then lord lieutenant of Ireland.—BOSWELL.

obliged by any favourable notice which they shall have the honour of receiving from you. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

The following is another instance of his active benevolence:

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"2d June, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—I have sent you some of my godson's[1] performances, of which I do not pretend to form any opinion. When I took the liberty of mentioning him to you, I did not know what I have since been told, that Mr. Moser had admitted him among the students of the Academy. What more can be done for him, I earnestly entreat you to consider; for I am very desirous that he should derive some advantage from my connexion with him. If you are inclined to see him, I will bring him to wait on you at any time that you shall be pleased to appoint. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Letters, vol. ii. p. 261.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"Oxford, 11th June, 1783.

"Yesterday I came to Oxford without fatigue or inconvenience. I read in the coach before dinner. I dined moderately, and slept well; but find my breath not free this morning.

"Dr. Edwards, to whom I wrote of my purpose to come, has defeated his own kindness by its excess. He has gone out of his own rooms for my reception; and therefore I cannot decently stay long, unless I can change my abode, which it will not be very easy to do: nor do I know what attractions I shall find here. Here is Miss Moore at Dr. Adams's, with whom I shall dine to-morrow."

p. 262.

"London, 13th June, 1783.

"Seward called on me yesterday. He is going only for a few weeks—first to Paris, and then to Flanders, to contemplate the pictures of Claude Loraine; and he asked me if that was not as good a way as any of spending time—that time which returns no more—of which, however, a great part seems to be very foolishly spent, even by the wisest and the best.

[1] Son of Mr. Samuel Paterson.—BOSWELL. [Probably a brother of him mentioned *ante*, vol. iii. p. 455.—ED.]

"Poor Lawrence[1] and his youngest son died almost on the same day."]

My anxious apprehensions at parting with him this year proved to be but too well founded; for not long afterwards he had a dreadful stroke of the palsy, of which there are very full and accurate accounts in letters written by himself, to show with what composure of mind and resignation to the Divine Will his steady piety enabled him to behave.

"TO MR. EDMUND ALLEN.

"17th June, 1783.

"It has pleased God this morning to deprive me of the powers of speech; and as I do not know but that it may be his further good pleasure to deprive me soon of my senses, I request you will, on the receipt of this note, come to me, and act for me as the exigences of my case may require. I am sincerely yours, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REVEREND DR. JOHN TAYLOR.

"17th June, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—It has pleased GOD, by a paralytick stroke in the night, to deprive me of speech.

"I am very desirous of Dr. Heberden's assistance, as I think my case is not past remedy. Let me see you as soon as it is possible. Bring Dr. Heberden with you, if you can; but come yourself at all events. I am glad you are so well when I am so dreadfully attacked.

"I think that by a speedy application of stimulants much may be done. I question if a vomit, vigorous and rough, would not rouse the organs of speech to action. As it is too early to send, I will try to recollect what I can that can be suspected to have brought on this dreadful distress.

"I have been accustomed to bleed frequently for an asthmatick complaint; but have forborne for some time by Dr. Pepys's persuasion, who perceived my legs beginning to swell. I sometimes alleviate a painful, or, more properly, an oppressive con-

[1] [Dr. Lawrence, born in 1711, died in 1783, the 13th of June. His son, the Reverend J. Lawrence, died on the 15th. The *Biographical Dictionary* says that Johnson's Latin Ode to Dr. Lawrence was on the death of one of his sons, who died in India. It would rather appear to have been written on the *fatal* illness of this son; who, however, survived his father two days.—ED.]

striction of my chest, by opiates; and have lately taken opium frequently; but the last, or two last times, in smaller quantities. My largest dose is three grains, and last night I took but two. You will suggest these things (and they are all that I can call to mind) to Dr. Heberden. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

Two days after he wrote thus to Mrs. Thrale[1]:

"On Monday, the 16th, I sat for my picture, and walked a considerable way with little inconvenience. In the afternoon and evening I felt myself light and easy, and began to plan schemes of life. Thus I went to bed, and in a short time waked and sat up, as has been long my custom, when I felt a confusion and indistinctness in my head, which lasted, I suppose, about half a minute. I was alarmed, and prayed God, that however he might afflict my body, he would spare my understanding. This prayer, that I might try the integrity of my faculties, I made in Latin verse. The lines were not very good, but I knew them not to be very good: I made them easily, and concluded myself to be unimpaired in my faculties.

"Soon after I perceived that I had suffered a paralytick stroke, and that my speech was taken from me. I had no pain, and so little dejection in this dreadful state, that I wondered at my own apathy, and considered that perhaps death itself, when it should come, would excite less horrour than seems now to attend it.

"In order to rouse the vocal organs, I took two drams. Wine has been celebrated for the production of eloquence. I put myself into violent motion, and I think repeated it; but all was vain. I then went to bed, and, strange as it may seem, I think slept. When I saw light, it was time to contrive what I should do. Though God stopped my speech, he left me my hand: I enjoyed a mercy which was not granted to my dear friend Lawrence, who now perhaps overlooks me as I am writing, and rejoices that I have what he wanted. My first note was necessarily to my servant, who came in talking, and could not immediately comprehend why he should read what I put into his hands.

"I then wrote a card to Mr. Allen, that I might have a discreet friend at hand, to act as occasion should require. In penning this note I had some difficulty: my hand, I knew not how nor why, made wrong letters. I then wrote to Dr. Taylor

[1] Vol. ii. p. 268, of Mrs. Thrale's Collection.—BOSWELL.

to come to me, and bring Dr. Heberden; and I sent to Dr. Brocklesby, who is my neighbour. My physicians are very friendly, and give me great hopes; but you may imagine my situation. I have so far recovered my vocal powers, as to repeat the Lord's Prayer with no imperfect articulation. My memory, I hope, yet remains as it was; but such an attack produces solicitude for the safety of every faculty."

"TO MR. THOMAS DAVIES.

"18th June, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—I have had, indeed, a very heavy blow; but God, who yet spares my life, I humbly hope will spare my understanding and restore my speech. As I am not at all helpless, I want no particular assistance, but am strongly affected by Mrs. Davies's tenderness; and when I think she can do me good, shall be very glad to call upon her. I had ordered friends to be shut out; but one or two have found the way in; and if you come you shall be admitted; for I know not whom I can see that will bring more amusement on his tongue, or more kindness in his heart. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

It gives me great pleasure to preserve such a memorial of Johnson's regard for Mr. Davies, to whom I was indebted for my introduction to him[1]. He indeed loved Davies cordially, of which I shall give the following little evidence:—One day when he had treated him with too much asperity, Tom, who was not without pride and spirit, went off in a passion; but he had hardly reached home, when Frank, who had been sent after him, delivered this note: "Come, come, dear Davies, I am always sorry when we quarrel; send me word that we are friends."

["TO MRS THRALE. Letters, vol. ii. p. 273.

"London, 20th June, 1783.

"You will forgive the gross images that disease must necessarily present. Dr. Lawrence said that medical treatises should be always in Latin.

* * * * * *

[1] Poor Derrick, however, though he did not himself introduce me to Dr. Johnson as he promised, had the merit of introducing me to Davies, the immediate introductor.—BOSWELL.

"I never had any distortion of the countenance but what Dr. Brocklesby called a little *prolapsus*, which went away the second day.

"I was this day directed to eat flesh, and I dined very copiously upon roasted lamb and boiled pease. I then went to sleep in a chair; and when I waked, I found Dr. Brocklesby sitting by me, and fell to talking with him in such a manner as made me glad, and, I hope made me thankful. The doctor fell to repeating Juvenal's ninth satire; but I let him see that the province was mine.

"I am to take wine to-night, and hope it will do me good."

Pearson MSS.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

"London, 25th June. 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—Since the papers have given an account of my illness, it is proper that I should give my friends some account of it myself.

"Very early in the morning of the 16th[1] of this month I perceived my speech taken from me. When it was light I sat down and wrote such directions as appeared proper. Dr. Heberden and Dr. Brocklesby were called. Blisters were applied, and medicines given. Before night I began to speak with some freedom, which has been increasing ever since, so that I have now very little impediment in my utterance. Dr. Heberden took his leave this morning.

"Since I received this stroke I have in other respects been better than I was before, and hope yet to have a comfortable summer. Let me have your prayers.

"If writing is not troublesome, let me know whether you are pretty well, and how you have passed the winter and spring.

"Make my compliments to all my friends. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Letters, vol. ii. p. 280.

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 28th June, 1783.

"Your letter is just such as I desire, and as from you I hope always to deserve.

"The black dog[2] I hope always to resist, and in time to drive, though I am deprived of almost all those that used to help me. The neighbourhood is impoverished. I had once Richardson

[1] [Mistake for 17th—ED.]
[2] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 292.—ED.]

and Lawrence in my reach. Mrs. Allen is dead. My home has lost Levett; a man who took interest in every thing, and therefore ready at conversation. Mrs. Williams is so weak that she can be a companion no longer. When I rise, my breakfast is solitary; the black dog waits to share it. From breakfast to dinner he continues barking, except that Dr. Brocklesby for a little keeps him at a distance. Dinner with a sick woman you may venture to suppose not much better than solitary. After dinner, what remains but to count the clock, and hope for that sleep which I can scarce expect? Night comes at last, and some hours of restlessness and confusion bring me again to a day of solitude. What shall exclude the black dog from an habitation like this? If I were a little richer, I would perhaps take some cheerful female into the house.

* * * * * *

"Last night fresh flies were put to my head, and hindered me from sleeping. To-day I fancy myself incommoded with heat.

"I have, however, watered the garden both yesterday and to-day, just as I watered the laurels in the island"] [at Streatham.]

[Amidst all this distress and danger, we find by the following and some subsequent letters to or concerning Mr. Lowe[1], that he was still ready to exert himself for his humble friend. ED.

"TO MR. LOWE. MS.

"Friday, 20th June, 1783.

"SIR,—You know, I suppose, that a sudden illness makes it impracticable to me to wait on Mr. Barry, and the time is short. If it be your opinion that the end can be obtained by writing, I am very willing to write, and, perhaps, it may do as well: it is, at least, all that can be expected at present from, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON.

"If you would have me write, come to me: I order your admission."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 3d July, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—Your anxiety about my health is very friendly

[1] [Communicated by Mr. Markland from Mr. J. C. Freeling.—ED.]

and very agreeable with your general kindness. I have indeed had a very frightful blow. On the 17th of last month, about three in the morning, as near as I can guess, I perceived myself almost totally deprived of speech. I had no pain. My organs were so obstructed that I could say *no*, but could scarcely say *yes*. I wrote the necessary directions, for it pleased God to spare my hand, and sent for Dr. Heberden and Dr. Brocklesby. Between the time in which I discovered my own disorder, and that in which I sent for the doctors, I had, I believe, in spite of my surprise and solicitude, a little sleep, and nature began to renew its operations. They came and gave the directions which the disease required, and from that time I have been continually improving in articulation. I can now speak; but the nerves are weak, and I cannot continue discourse long; but strength, I hope, will return. The physicians consider me as cured. I was last Sunday at church. On Tuesday I took an airing to Hampstead, and dined with the Club, where Lord Palmerston was proposed, and, against my opinion, was rejected[1]. I designed to go next week with Mr. Langton to Rochester, where I purpose to stay about ten days, and then try some other air. I have many kind invitations. Your brother has very frequently inquired after me. Most of my friends have, indeed, been very attentive. Thank dear Lord Hailes for his present.

"I hope you found at your return every thing gay and prosperous, and your lady, in particular, quite recovered and confirmed. Pay her my respects. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Letters, vol. ii. p. 286.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 3d July, 1783.

"Dr. Brocklesby yesterday dismissed the cantharides, and I can now find a soft place upon my pillow. Last night was cool, and I rested well; and this morning I have been a friend at a poetical difficulty. Here is now a glimpse of daylight again; but how near is the evening none can tell, and I will not prognosticate. We all know that from none of us it can be far distant: may none of us know this in vain!

"I went, as I took care to boast, on Tuesday to the Club, and hear that I was thought to have performed as well as usual.

"I dined on fish, with the wing of a small turkey-chick, and left roast beef, goose, and venison-pie untouched. I live much

[1] His lordship was soon after chosen, and is now a member of the Club.—BOSWELL.

on pease, and never had them so good for so long a time in any year that I can remember.

* * * * * *

"Along with your kind letter yesterday came one, likewise very kind, from the Astons at Lichfield; but I do not know whether, as the summer is so far advanced, I shall travel so far; though I am not without hopes that frequent change of air may fortify me against the winter, which has been, in modern phrase, of late years very *inimical* to, madam, your, &c."]

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"London, 5th July, 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—The account which you give of your health is but melancholy. May it please God to restore you. My disease affected my speech, and still continues, in some degree, to obstruct my utterance; my voice is distinct enough for a while, but the organs being still weak are quickly weary; but in other respects I am, I think, rather better than I have lately been, and can let you know my state without the help of any other hand.

"In the opinion of my friends, and in my own, I am gradually mending. The physicians consider me as cured, and I had leave four days ago to wash the cantharides from my head. Last Tuesday I dined at the Club.

"I am going next week into Kent, and purpose to change the air frequently this summer: whether I shall wander so far as Staffordshire I cannot tell. I should be glad to come. Return my thanks to Mrs. Cobb, and Mr. Pearson [1], and all that have shown attention to me.

"Let us, my dear, pray for one another, and consider our sufferings as notices mercifully given us to prepare ourselves for another state.

"I live now but in a melancholy way. My old friend Mr. Levett is dead, who lived with me in the house, and was useful and companionable; Mrs. Desmoulins is gone away; and Mrs. Williams is so much decayed, that she can add little to another's gratifications. The world passes away, and we are passing with it; but there is, doubtless, another world, which will endure for ever. Let us all fit ourselves for it. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] The Reverend Mr. Pearson, to whom Mrs. Lucy Porter bequeathed the greater part of her property.—MALONE.

Murph Essay, p. 121. [During his illness Mr. Murphy visited him, and found him reading Dr. Watson's Chemistry: articulating with difficulty, he said, "From this book he who knows nothing may learn a great deal, and he who knows will be pleased to find his knowledge recalled to his mind in a manner highly pleasing."]

Such was the general vigour of his constitution, that he recovered from this alarming and severe attack with wonderful quickness; so that in July he was able to make a visit to Mr. Langton at Rochester, where he passed about a fortnight, and made little excursions as easily as at any time of his life.

["TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 8th July, 1783.

"Langton and I have talked of passing a little time at Rochester together, till neither knows well how to refuse; though I think he is not eager to take me, and I am not desirous to be taken. His family is numerous, and his house little. I have let him know, for his relief, that I do not mean to burden him more than a week. He is, however, among those who wish me well, and would exert what power he has to do me good."

"London, 23d July, 1783.

"I have been thirteen days at Rochester, and am now just returned. I came back by water in a common boat twenty miles for a shilling; and when I landed at Billingsgate I carried my budget myself to Cornhill before I could get a coach, and was not much incommoded."]

Murph. Essay, p. 121. [Mr. Murphy states that in the month of August he set out for Lichfield on a visit to Miss Lucy Porter; and in his way back paid his respects to Dr. Adams, at Oxford. If the dates of the letters published by Mrs. Thrale be correct, it is hardly possible that he could have gone to Lichfield, and there is barely time for a short excursion to Oxford, where,

Ed.

however, it seems from the following letters, he certainly was about this period.]

["TO MRS. THRALE. Letters, vol. ii. p. 300.

"London, 13th August, 1783.

"Of this world, in which you represent me as delighting to live, I can say little. Since I came home I have only been to church, once to Burney's, once to Paradise's, and once to Reynolds's. With Burney I saw Dr. Rose, his new relation, with whom I have been many years acquainted. If I discovered no reliques of disease, I am glad; but Fanny's trade is fiction [1].

"I have since partaken of an epidemical disorder; but common evils produce no dejection.

"Paradise's company, I fancy, disappointed him; I remember nobody. With Reynolds was the Archbishop of Tuam, a man coarse of voice and inelegant of language [2].

"I am now broken with disease, without the alleviation of familiar friendship or domestick society; I have no middle state between clamour and silence, between general conversation and self-tormenting solitude. Levett is dead, and poor Williams is making haste to die: I know not if she will ever come out of her chamber.

"I am now quite alone; but let me turn my thoughts another way."

"TO MISS REYNOLDS. Reyn. MSS.

"18th August, 1783.

"MY DEAREST DEAR,—I wish all that you have heard of my health were true; but be it as it may, if you will be pleased to name the day and hour when you would see me, I will be as punctual as I can. I am, madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. THRALE. Letters, vol. ii. p. 301.

"London, 20th August, 1783.

"This has been a day of great emotion; the office of the communion for the sick has been performed in poor Mrs. Williams's chamber. At home I see almost all my companions dead or dying. At Oxford I have just left Wheeler, the man

[1] [Miss Fanny Burney, the celebrated novelist, had, it seems, given what Johnson feared was too favourable an account of him.—ED.]

[2] [Hon. Jos. Deane Bourke, afterwards Earl of Mayo.—ED.]

Letters, vol. ii. p. 301.

with whom I most delighted to converse. The sense of my own diseases, and the sight of the world sinking round me, oppress me perhaps too much. I hope that all these admonitions will not be vain, and that I shall learn to die as dear Williams is dying, who was very cheerful before and after this awful solemnity, and seems to resign herself with calmness and hope upon eternal mercy.

"I read your last kind letter with great delight; but when I came to *love* and honour, what sprung in my mind?—How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not.

"I sat to Mrs. Reynolds yesterday for my picture, perhaps the tenth time; and I sat for three hours with the patience of *mortal born to bear.*"

Reyn. MSS.

"TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"24th August, 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—When your letter came I was so engaged that I could not conveniently write. Whether I shall go to Salisbury I know not, for I have had no answer to my last letter; but I would not have you put off your journey, for all my motions are uncertain. I wish you a happy journey. I am, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Letters, vol. ii. p. 303.

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 26th August, 1783.

"Things stand with me much as they have done for some time. Mrs. Williams fancies now and then that she grows better, but her vital powers appear to be slowly burning out. Nobody thinks, however, that she will very soon be quite wasted; and as she suffers me to be of very little use to her, I have determined to pass some time with Mr. Bowles, near Salisbury, and have taken a place for Thursday.

"Some benefit may be perhaps received from change of air, some from change of company, and some from mere change of place. It is not easy to grow well in a chamber where one has long been sick, and where every thing seen, and every person speaking, revives and impresses images of pain. Though it be true that no man can run away from himself, yet he may escape from many causes of useless uneasiness. That *the mind is its own place* is the boast of a fallen angel that had learned to lie [1]. External locality has great effects, at least upon all embodied

[1] ["Paradise Lost," book i. line 254.—ED.]

beings. I hope this little journey will afford me at least some suspense of melancholy."]

Toward the end of August he went as far as the neighbourhood of Salisbury, to Heale, the seat of William Bowles, Esq. a gentleman whom I have heard him praise for exemplary religious order in his family. In his diary I find a short but honourable mention of this visit:—"August 28, I came to Heale without fatigue. 30. I am entertained quite to my mind."

"TO DR. BROCKLESBY.

"Heale, near Salisbury, 29th August, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—Without appearing to want a just sense of your kind attention, I cannot omit to give an account of the day which seemed to appear in some sort perilous. I rose at five, and went out at six; and having reached Salisbury about nine, went forward a few miles in my friend's chariot. I was no more wearied with the journey, though it was a high-hung, rough coach, than I should have been forty years ago. We shall now see what air will do. The country is all a plain; and the house in which I am, so far as I can judge from my window, for I write before I have left my chamber, is sufficiently pleasant.

"Be so kind as to continue your attention to Mrs. Williams. It is great consolation to the well, and still greater to the sick, that they find themselves not neglected; and I know that you will be desirous of giving comfort, even where you have no great hope of giving help.

"Since I wrote the former part of the letter, I find that by the course of the post I cannot send it before the thirty-first. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

While he was here, he had a letter from Dr. Brocklesby, acquainting him of the death of Mrs. Williams, which affected him a good deal. Though for several years her temper had not been complacent, she had valuable qualities, and her departure left a blank in his house. Upon this occasion he, according to his habitual course of piety, composed a prayer [1].

[1] Prayers and Meditations, p. 226.—BOSWELL.

["DR. BROCKLESBY TO DR. JOHNSON.

"6th September, 1783.

"Mrs. Williams, from mere inanition, has at length paid the great debt to nature about three o'clock this morning. She died without a struggle, retaining her faculties entire to the very last; and, as she expressed it, having set her house in order, was prepared to leave it at the last summons of nature."

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 22d Sept. 1783.

"Poor Williams has, I hope, seen the end of her afflictions. She acted with prudence, and she bore with fortitude. She has left me.

Thou thy weary task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages [1].

"Had she had good-humour and prompt elocution, her universal curiosity and comprehensive knowledge would have made her the delight of all that knew her. She left her little to your charity-school."]

I shall here insert a few particulars concerning him, with which I have been favoured by one of his friends.

"He had once conceived the design of writing the Life of Oliver Cromwell, saying, that he thought it must be highly curious to trace his extraordinary rise to the supreme power from so obscure a beginning. He at length laid aside his scheme, on discovering that all that can be told of him is already in print; and that it is impracticable to procure any authentick information in addition to what the world is already in possession of [2].

[1] [Dirge in Cymbeline.—ED.]

[2] Mr. Malone observes, "This, however, was entirely a mistake, as appears from the Memoirs published by Mr. Noble. Had Johnson been furnished with the materials which the industry of that gentleman has procured, and with others which it is believed are yet preserved in manuscript, he would, without doubt, have produced a most valuable and curious history of Cromwell's life."—BOSWELL. I may add, that, had Johnson given us a Life of Cromwell, we should not have been disgusted in numberless instances with—"My Lord Protector"

"He had likewise projected, but at what part of his life is not known, a work to show how small a quantity of REAL FICTION there is in the world; and that the same images, with very little variation, have served all the authours who have ever written."

"His thoughts in the latter part of his life were frequently employed on his deceased friends. He often muttered these or such like sentences: 'Poor man! and then he died.'"

"Speaking of a certain literary friend, 'He is a very pompous puzzling fellow,' said he: 'he lent me a letter once that somebody had written to him, no matter what it was about; but he wanted to have the letter back, and expressed a mighty value for it: he hoped it was to be met with again; he would not lose it for a thousand pounds. I laid my hand upon it soon afterwards, and gave it him. I believe I said I was very glad to have met with it. O, then he did not know that it signified any thing. So you see, when the letter was lost it was worth a thousand pounds, and when it was found it was not worth a farthing.'"

"The style and character of his conversation is pretty generally known: it was certainly conducted in conformity with a precept of Lord Bacon, but it is not clear, I apprehend, that this conformity was either perceived or intended by Johnson. The precept alluded to is as follows: 'In all kinds of speech, either pleasant, grave, severe, or ordinary, it is convenient to speak leisurely, and rather drawlingly than hastily: because hasty speech confounds the memory,

and "My Lady PROTECTRESS;" and certainly the brutal ruffian who presided in the bloody assembly that murdered their sovereign would have been characterised by very different epithets than those which are applied to him in this work, where we find him described as "the BOLD *and* DETERMINED Bradshaw."—MALONE.

and oftentimes, besides the unseemliness, drives a man either to stammering, a non-plus, or harping on that which should follow; whereas a slow speech confirmeth the memory, addeth a conceit of wisdom to the hearers, besides a seemliness of speech and countenance[1].' Dr. Johnson's method of conversation was certainly calculated to excite attention, and to amuse and instruct (as it happened), without wearying or confusing his company. He was always most perfectly clear and perspicuous; and his language was so accurate, and his sentences so neatly constructed, that his conversation might have been all printed without any correction. At the same time, it was easy and natural; the accuracy of it had no appearance of labour, constraint, or stiffness: he seemed more correct than others by the force of habit, and the customary exercises of his powerful mind."

"He spoke often in praise of French literature. 'The French are excellent in this,' he would say, 'they have a book on every subject.' From what he had seen of them he denied them the praise of superior politeness, and mentioned, with very visible disgust, the custom they have of spitting on the floors of their apartments. 'This,' said the doctor, 'is as gross a thing as can well be done; and one wonders how any man, or set of men, can persist in so offensive a practice for a whole day together: one should expect that the first effort towards civilization would remove it even among savages.'"

"Baxter's 'Reasons of the Christian Religion' he thought contained the best collection of the evidences of the divinity of the Christian system."

"Chymistry was always an interesting pursuit with

[1] Hints for Civil Conversation.—*Bacon's Works*, 4to. vol. i. p. 571.—MALONE.

Dr. Johnson. Whilst he was in Wiltshire, he attended some experiments that were made by a physician at Salisbury on the new kinds of air. In the course of the experiments frequent mention being made of Dr. Priestley, Dr. Johnson knit his brows, and in a stern manner inquired, 'Why do we hear so much of Dr. Priestley[1]?' He was very properly answered, 'Sir, because we are indebted to him for these important discoveries.' On this Dr. Johnson

[1] I do not wonder at Johnson's displeasure when the name of Dr. Priestley was mentioned; for I know no writer who has been suffered to publish more pernicious doctrines. I shall instance only three. First, *Materialism*; by which *mind* is denied to human nature; which, if believed, must deprive us of every elevated principle. Secondly, *Necessity*; or the doctrine that every action, whether good or bad, is included in an unchangeable and unavoidable system; a notion utterly subversive of moral government. Thirdly, that we have no reason to think that the *future* world (which, as he is pleased to *inform* us, will be adapted to our *merely improved* nature) will be materially different from *this*; which, if believed, would sink wretched mortals into despair, as they could no longer hope for the "rest that remaineth for the people of God," or for that happiness which is revealed to us as something beyond our present conceptions, but would feel themselves doomed to a continuation of the uneasy state under which they now groan. I say nothing of the petulant intemperance with which he dares to insult the venerable establishments of his country. As a specimen of his writings, I shall quote the following passage, which appears to me equally absurd and impious, and which might have been retorted upon him by the men who were prosecuted for burning his house. "I cannot," says he, "as a *necessarian* [meaning *necessitarian*], hate *any man*; because I consider him as *being*, in all respects, just what God has *made him to be*; and also as *doing*, *with respect to me*, nothing but what he was *expressly designed* and *appointed* to do: God being the *only cause*, and men nothing more than the *instruments* in his hands to *execute all his pleasure*."—*Illustrations of Philosophical Necessity*, p. 111. The Reverend Dr. Parr, in a late tract, appears to suppose that *Dr. Johnson not only endured, but almost solicited, an interview with Dr. Priestley*. In justice to Dr. Johnson, I declare my firm belief that he never did. My illustrious friend was particularly resolute in not giving countenance to men whose writings he considered as pernicious to society. I was present at Oxford when Dr. Price, even before he had rendered himself so generally obnoxious by his zeal for the French revolution, came into a company where Johnson was, who instantly left the room. Much more would he have reprobated Dr. Priestley. Whoever wishes to see a perfect delineation of this *Literary Jack of all Trades* may find it in an ingenious tract, entitled "*A Small Whole-Length of Dr. Priestley*," printed for Rivingtons, in St. Paul's Churchyard.—BOSWELL. [The foregoing note produced a reply from Dr. Parr (*Gent. Mag.* March, 1795), in which he endeavoured to support his assertion by evidence, which, however, really contradicted him. For instead of Johnson's having *solicited an interview* (which was the point in dispute), Dr. Parr is obliged to admit that the meeting was at Mr. Paradise's *dinner table*, that Dr. Johnson did not *solicit the interview*, but was aware that Dr. Priestley was invited, and that he behaved to him with civility: and then Dr. Parr concludes, in a way that does little credit either to his accuracy or his candour, "Should Mr. Boswell be pleased to maintain that Dr. Johnson rather *consented* to the interview, than *almost solicited it*, I shall not object to the change of expression."—ED.]

appeared well content; and replied, 'Well, well, I believe we are; and let every man have the honour he has merited.'"

"A friend was one day, about two years before his death, struck with some instance of Dr. Johnson's great candour. 'Well, sir,' said he, 'I will always say that you are a very candid man.' 'Will you?' replied the doctor; 'I doubt then you will be very singular. But, indeed, sir,' continued he, 'I look upon myself to be a man very much misunderstood. I am not an uncandid, nor am I a severe man. I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest; and people are apt to believe me serious: however, I am more candid than I was when I was younger. As I know more of mankind, I expect less of them, and am ready now to call a man *a good man* upon easier terms than I was formerly.'"

On his return from Heale he wrote to Dr. Burney:

"I came home on the 18th of September, at noon, to a very disconsolate house. You and I have lost our friends; but you have more friends at home. My domestick companion is taken from me. She is much missed, for her acquisitions were many, and her curiosity universal; so that she partook of every conversation. I am not well enough to go much out; and to sit, and eat, or fast alone, is very wearisome. I always mean to send my compliments to all the ladies."

ED. [As Miss Williams enjoyed a pension from Mrs. Montagu, Johnson thought himself bound to acquaint her with the death of the object of her charity.

Mont. MS. "DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU.

"22d September, 1783.

"MADAM,—That respect which is always due to beneficence makes it fit that you should be informed, otherwise than by the papers, that, on the 6th of this month, died your pensioner, Anna Williams, of whom it may be truly said, that she received your bounty with gratitude, and enjoyed it with propriety. You perhaps have still her prayers.

"You have, madam, the satisfaction of having alleviated the sufferings of a woman of great merit, both intellectual and moral. Her curiosity was universal, her knowledge was very extensive, and she sustained forty years of misery with steady fortitude. Thirty years and more she had been my companion, and her death has left me very desolate.

"That I have not written sooner, you may impute to absence, to ill health, to any thing rather than want of regard to the benefactress of my departed friend. I am, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

His fortitude and patience met with severe trials during this year. The stroke of the palsy has been related circumstantially; but he was also afflicted with the gout, and was besides troubled with a complaint which not only was attended with immediate inconvenience, but threatened him with a chirurgical operation, from which most men would shrink. The complaint was a *sarcocele*, which Johnson bore with uncommon firmness, and was not at all frightened while he looked forward to amputation. He was attended by Mr. Pott and Mr. Cruikshank. I have before me a letter of the 30th of July, this year, to Mr. Cruikshank, in which he says, "I am going to put myself into your hands:" and another, accompanying a set of his "Lives of the Poets," in which he says, "I beg your acceptance of these volumes, as an acknowledgment of the great favours which you have bestowed on, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant." I have in my possession several more letters from him to Mr. Cruikshank, and also to Dr. Mudge at Plymouth, which it would be improper to insert, as they are filled with unpleasing technical details. I shall, however, extract from his letters to Dr. Mudge such passages as show either a felicity of expression, or the undaunted state of his mind.

"My conviction of your skill, and my belief of your friendship, determine me to entreat your opinion and advice."

"In this state I with great earnestness desire you to tell me what is to be done. Excision is doubtless necessary to the cure, and I know not any means of palliation. The operation is doubtless painful; but is it dangerous? The pain I hope to endure with decency; but I am loath to put life into much hazard."

"By representing the gout as an antagonist to the palsy, you have said enough to make it welcome. This is not strictly the first fit, but I hope it is as good as the first; for it is the second that ever confined me; and the first was ten years ago, much less fierce and fiery than this."

"Write, dear sir, what you can to inform or encourage me. The operation is not delayed by any fears or objections of mine."

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"London, 29th Sept. 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—You may very reasonably charge me with insensibility of your kindness and that of Lady Rothes, since I have suffered so much time to pass without paying any acknowledgment. I now, at last, return my thanks; and why I did it not sooner I ought to tell you. I went into Wiltshire as soon as I well could, and was there much employed in palliating my own malady. Disease produces much selfishness. A man in pain is looking after ease, and lets most other things go as chance shall dispose of them. In the mean time I have lost a companion [1], to whom I have had recourse for domestick amusement for thirty years, and whose variety of knowledge never was exhausted; and now return to a habitation vacant and desolate. I carry about a very troublesome and dangerous complaint, which admits no cure but by the chirurgical knife. Let me have your prayers. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

Happily the complaint abated without his being put to the torture of amputation. But we must surely admire the manly resolution which he discovered while it hung over him.

In a letter to the same gentleman he writes, "The gout has within these four days come upon me with

[1] Mrs. Williams.—BOSWELL.

a violence which I never experienced before. It made me helpless as an infant." And in another, having mentioned Mrs. Williams, he says,—"whose death following that of Levett has now made my house a solitude. She left her little substance to a charity-school. She is, I hope, where there is neither darkness[1], nor want, nor sorrow."

I wrote to him, begging to know the state of his health, and mentioned that "Baxter's Anacreon, which is in the library at Auchinleck, was, I find, collated by my father in 1727 with the MS. belonging to the University of Leyden, and he has made a number of notes upon it. Would you advise me to publish a new edition of it?"

His answer was dated September 30.

"You should not make your letters such rarities, when you know, or might know, the uniform state of my health. It is very long since I heard from you; and that I have not answered is a very insufficient reason for the silence of a friend. Your Anacreon is a very uncommon book: neither London nor Cambridge can supply a copy of that edition. Whether it should be reprinted, you cannot do better than consult Lord Hailes. Besides my constant and radical disease, I have been for these ten days much harassed with the gout; but that has now remitted. I hope God will yet grant me a little longer life, and make me less unfit to appear before him."

["TO MR. TOMKESON, IN SOUTHAMPTON-STREET, COVENT GARDEN[2]. MS.

"1st October, 1783.

"SIR,—I have known Mr. Lowe very familiarly a great while. I consider him as a man of very clear and vigorous understanding, and conceive his principles to be such that, whatever you transact with him, you have nothing to expect from him unbecoming a gentleman. I am, sir, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] [An allusion to her *blindness*.—ED.]
[2] [Communicated by Mr. J. C. Freeling.—ED.]

Reyn. MS.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"1st October, 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—I am very ill indeed, and to my former illness is superadded the gout. I am now without shoes, and I have been lately almost motionless.

"To my other afflictions is added solitude. Mrs. Williams, a companion of thirty years, is gone. It is a comfort to me to have you near me. I am, madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Letters, vol. ii. p. 313.

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 6th October, 1783.

"I yet sit without shoes, with my foot upon a pillow, but my pain and weakness are much abated, and I am no longer crawling upon two sticks. To the gout my mind is reconciled by another letter from Mr. Mudge, in which he vehemently urges the excision, and tells me that the gout will secure me from every thing paralytick: if this be true, I am ready to say to the arthritick pains, *Deh! venite ogne di, durate un anno*[1].

"My physician in ordinary is Dr. Brocklesby, who comes almost every day; my surgeon, in Mr. Pott's absence, is Mr. Cruikshank, the present reader in Dr. Hunter's school. Neither of them, however, do much more than look and talk. The general health of my body is as good as you have ever known it—almost as good as I can remember.

"The carriage which you supposed made rough by my weakness was the common Salisbury stage, high hung, and driven to Salisbury in a day. I was not fatigued.

"Mr. Pott has been out of town, but I expect to see him soon, and will then tell you something of the main affair, of which there seems now to be a better prospect.

"This afternoon I have given [tea] to Mrs. Cholmondeley, Mrs. Way, Lady Sheffield's relation, Mr. Kindersley, the describer of Indian manners, and another anonymous lady.

"As Mrs. Williams received a pension from Mrs. Montagu; it was fit to notify her death. The account has brought me a letter not only civil but tender; so I hope peace is proclaimed."

p. 315.

"London, 9th October, 1783.

"Two nights ago Mr. Burke sat with me a long time. He seems much pleased with his journey. We had both seen Stone-

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 7.—ED.]

henge this summer for the first time. I told him that the view had enabled me to confute two opinions which have been advanced about it. One, that the materials are not natural stones, but an artificial composition hardened by time. This notion is as old as Camden's time; and has this strong argument to support it, that stone of that species is nowhere to be found. The other opinion, advanced by Dr. Charlton, is, that it was erected by the Danes. Letters, vol. ii. p. 315.

"Mr. Bowles made me observe, that the transverse stones were fixed on the perpendicular supporters by a knob formed on the top of the upright stone, which entered into a hollow cut in the crossing stone. This is a proof that the enormous edifice was raised by a people who had not yet the knowledge of mortar[1]; which cannot be supposed of the Danes, who came hither in ships, and were not ignorant certainly of the arts of life. This proves also the stones not to be factitious; for they that could mould such durable masses could do much more than make mortar, and could have continued the transverse from the upright part with the same paste.

"You have doubtless seen Stonehenge; and if you have not, I should think it a hard task to make an adequate description.

"It is in my opinion to be referred to the earliest habitation of the island, as a druidical monument of, at least, two thousand years; probably the most ancient work of man upon the island. Salisbury cathedral and its neighbour Stonehenge are two eminent monuments of art and rudeness, and may show the first essay and the last perfection in architecture."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS. Reyn. MS.

"23d October, 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—Instead of having me at your table, which cannot, I fear, quickly happen, come, if you can, to dine this day with me. It will give pleasure to a sick friend.

"Let me know whether you can come. I am, madam, yours affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS. Reyn. MS.

"London, 27th October, 1783.

"MY DEAREST DEAR,—I am able enough to write, for I have now neither sickness nor pain; only the gout has left my ankles somewhat weak.

[1] [Surely not. We who have the use of mortar use what are called *mortices;* similar in principle at least to the *knobs* and *hollows* of Stonehenge. —ED.]

"While the weather favours you, and the air does you good, stay in the country: when you come home, I hope we shall often see one another, and enjoy that friendship to which no time is likely to put an end on the part of, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

He this autumn received a visit from the celebrated Mrs. Siddons. He gives this account of it in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale.

"27th October.

"Mrs. Siddons, in her visit to me, behaved with great modesty and propriety, and left nothing behind her to be censured or despised. Neither praise nor money, the two powerful corruptors of mankind, seem to have depraved her. I shall be glad to see her again. Her brother Kemble[1] calls on me, and pleases me very well. Mrs. Siddons and I talked of plays; and she told me her intention of exhibiting this winter the characters of Constance, Catharine, and Isabella[2], in Shakspeare."

Mr. Kemble has favoured me with the following minute of what passed at this visit:

"When Mrs. Siddons came into the room, there happened to be no chair ready for her, which he observing said, with a smile, 'Madam, you who so often occasion a want of seats to other people will the more easily excuse the want of one yourself.'

"Having placed himself by her, he, with great good-humour, entered upon a consideration of the English drama; and, among other inquiries, particularly asked her which of Shakspeare's characters she was most pleased with. Upon her answering that she thought the character of Queen Catharine,

[1] [This great actor and amiable and accomplished man left the stage in 18 , and died 26th February, 1823, at Lausanne. In his own day he had no competitor in any walk of tragedy; and those who remembered Barry, Mossop, Henderson, and Garrick admitted, that in characters of high tragic dignity, such as Hamlet, Coriolanus, Alexander, Cato, he excelled all his predecessors, almost as much as his sister did all actresses in the female characters of the same heroic class.—ED.]

[2] [Isabella in Shakspeare's *Measure for Measure*. Mrs. Siddons had made her first appearance in Isabella in The Fatal Marriage.—ED.]

in Henry the Eighth, the most natural: 'I think so too, madam,' said he; 'and whenever you perform it, I will once more hobble out to the theatre myself.' Mrs. Siddons promised she would do herself the honour of acting his favourite part for him; but many circumstances happened to prevent the representation of King Henry the Eighth during the doctor's life[1].

"In the course of the evening he thus gave his opinion upon the merits of some of the principal performers whom he remembered to have seen upon the stage. 'Mrs. Porter in the vehemence of rage, and Mrs. Clive in the sprightliness of humour, I have never seen equalled. What Clive did best, she did better than Garrick; but could not do half so many things well: she was a better romp than any I ever saw in nature. Pritchard, in common life, was a vulgar idiot; she would talk of her *gownd:* but, when she appeared upon the stage, seemed to be inspired by gentility and understanding. I once talked with Colley Cibber, and thought him ignorant of the principles of his art. Garrick, madam, was no declaimer; there was not one of his own scene-shifters who could not have spoken *To be or not to be* better than he did: yet he was the only actor I ever saw, whom I could call a master both in tragedy and comedy; though I liked him best in comedy. A true conception of character, and natural expression of it, were his distinguished excellences.' Having expatiated, with his usual force and eloquence, on Mr. Garrick's extraordinary eminence as an actor, he concluded with this compliment to his social talents:

[1] [It was played many years after with critical attention to historical accuracy, and with great success. Mrs. Siddons played Catharine; Mr. Kemble, Wolsey; Mr. Charles Kemble, Cromwell. There is a very interesting picture, by Harlow (since engraved), of the trial-scene, with portraits of all the performers.—Ed.]

'And after all, madam, I thought him less to be envied on the stage than at the head of a table.'"

Johnson, indeed, had thought more upon the subject of acting than might be generally supposed. Talking of it one day to Mr. Kemble, he said, "Are you, sir, one of those enthusiasts who believe yourself transformed into the very character you represent?" Upon Mr. Kemble's answering, that he had never felt so strong a persuasion himself; "To be sure not, sir," said Johnson; "the thing is impossible. And if Garrick really believed himself to be that monster, Richard the Third, he deserved to be hanged every time he performed it[1]."

My worthy friend, Mr. John Nichols, was present when Mr. Henderson, the actor, paid a visit to Dr. Johnson, and was received in a very courteous manner[2].

I found among Dr. Johnson's papers the following letter to him, from the celebrated Mrs. Bellamy:

"TO DR. JOHNSON.

"No. 10, Duke-street, St. James's, 11th May, 1783.

"SIR,—The flattering remembrance of the partiality you honoured me with some years ago, as well as the humanity you are known to possess, has encouraged me to solicit your patronage at my benefit

"By a long chancery suit, and a complicated train of unfortunate events, I am reduced to the greatest distress; which obliges me, once more, to request the indulgence of the publick.

"Give me leave to solicit the honour of your company, and to assure you, if you grant my request, the gratification I shall feel from being patronized by Dr. Johnson will be infinitely superiour to any advantage that may arise from the benefit; as I am, with the profoundest respect, sir, your most obedient, humble servant, "G. A. BELLAMY."

[1] [Mr. Kemble told the Editor that the occasion on which he had felt himself the most affected—the most personally touched—was in playing the last scene of The Stranger with Mrs. Siddons. Her pathos, he said, in that part always overcame him.—ED.]

[2] See *Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1791.—BOSWELL.

I am happy in recording these particulars, which prove that my illustrious friend lived to think much more favourably of players than he appears to have done in the early part of his life [1].

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 10th Nov. 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—The death of poor Mr. Porter, of which your maid has sent an account, must have very much surprised you. The death of a friend is almost always unexpected: we do not love to think of it, and therefore are not prepared for its coming. He was, I think, a religious man, and therefore that his end was happy.

"Death has likewise visited my mournful habitation. Last month died Mrs. Williams, who had been to me for thirty years in the place of a sister: her knowledge was great and her conversation pleasing. I now live in cheerless solitude.

"My two last years have passed under the pressure of successive diseases. I have lately had the gout with some severity. But I wonderfully escaped the operation which I mentioned, and am upon the whole restored to health beyond my own expectation.

"As we daily see our friends die round us, we that are left must cling closer, and, if we can do nothing more, at least pray for one another; and remember, that as others die we must die too, and prepare ourselves diligently for the last great trial. I am, madam, yours affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. THRALE. Letters, vol. ii. p. 325.

"London, 13th November, 1783.

"Since you have written to me with the attention and tenderness of ancient time [2], your letters give me a great part of the pleasure which a life of solitude admits. You will never bestow any share of your good-will on one who deserves better. Those that have loved longest love best. A sudden blaze of kindness may by a single blast of coldness be extinguished; but

[1] [Johnson's dislike to players in early life was nothing more than his jealousy of Garrick's sudden elevation. After Garrick's death he began "to think more favourably of them."—ED.]

[2] [This is the first letter in which we perceive a serious coldness towards Mrs. Thrale, but it is clear that it had existed some time prior to this date, though it certainly had not been so early as Mr. Boswell supposed.—ED.]

Letters, vol. ii. p. 326. that fondness which length of time has connected with many circumstances and occasions, though it may for a while be depressed by disgust or resentment, with or without a cause, is hourly revived by accidental recollection. To those that have lived long together, every thing heard and every thing seen recalls some pleasure communicated or some benefit conferred, some petty quarrel or some slight endearment. Esteem of great powers, or amiable qualities newly discovered, may embroider a day or a week, but a friendship of twenty years is interwoven with the texture of life. A friend may be often found and lost; but an *old friend* never can be found, and nature has provided that he cannot easily be lost.

* * * * * *

"You seem to mention Lord Kilmurrey[1] as a stranger. We were at his house in Cheshire; and he one day dined with Sir Lynch. What he tells of the epigram is not true, but perhaps he does not know it to be false. Do not you remember how he rejoiced in having *no* park?—he could not disoblige his neighbours by sending them *no* venison."]

A pleasing instance of the generous attention of one of his friends has been discovered by the publication of Mrs. Thrale's Collection of Letters. In a p. 328. letter to one of the Miss Thrales, he writes, "A friend, whose name I will tell when your mamma has tried to guess it, sent to my physician to inquire whether this long train of illness had brought me into difficulties for want of money, with an invitation to send to him for what occasion required. I shall write this night to thank him, having no need to borrow." p. 342 And afterwards, in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, "Since you cannot guess, I will tell you, that the generous man was Gerard Hamilton. I returned him a very thankful and respectful letter."

I applied to Mr. Hamilton, by a common friend, and he has been so obliging as to let me have Johnson's letter to him upon this occasion, to adorn my collection.

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 131, and vol. iv. p. 207.—Ed.]

"TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM GERARD HAMILTON.

"19th November, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—Your kind inquiries after my affairs, and your generous offers, have been communicated to me by Dr. Brocklesby. I return thanks with great sincerity, having lived long enough to know what gratitude is due to such friendship; and entreat that my refusal may not be imputed to sullenness or pride. I am, indeed, in no want. Sickness is, by the generosity of my physicians, of little expense to me. But if any unexpected exigence should press me, you shall see, dear sir, how cheerfully I can be obliged to so much liberality. I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

I find in this, as in former years, notices of his kind attention to Mrs. Gardiner, who, though in the humble station of a tallow-chandler upon Snow-hill, was a woman of excellent good sense, pious, and charitable[1]. She told me she had been introduced to him by Mrs. Masters[2], the poetess, whose volumes he revised, and, it is said, illuminated here and there with a ray of his own genius. Mrs. Gardiner was very zealous for the support of the ladies' charity-school, in the parish of St. Sepulchre. It is confined to females; and, I am told, it afforded a hint for the story of "Betty Broom" in "The Idler." Johnson this year, I find, obtained for it a sermon from the late Bishop of St. Asaph, Dr. Shipley, whom he, in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, characterises as "knowing and conversable;" and whom all who knew his lordship, even those who differed from him in politicks, remember with much respect.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS. Reyn. MS.

"27th November, 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—I beg that you will let me know by this messenger whether you will do me the honour of dining with

[1] In his will Dr. Johnson left her a book "at her election, to keep as a token of remembrance."—MALONE. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 225. She died in 1789, æt. 74.—ED.]

[2] [*Ante*, vol. i. p. 225.—ED.]

me, and, if you will, whether we shall eat our dinner by our own selves, or call Mrs. Desmoulins. I am, dearest dear, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

The Earl of Carlisle having written a tragedy, entitled "The Father's Revenge," some of his lordship's friends applied to Mrs. Chapone[1], to prevail on Dr. Johnson to read and give his opinion of it, which he accordingly did, in a letter to that lady. Sir Joshua Reynolds having informed me that this letter was in Lord Carlisle's possession, though I was not fortunate enough to have the honour of being known to his lordship, trusting to the general courtesy of literature, I wrote to him, requesting the favour of a copy of it, and to be permitted to insert it in my Life of Dr. Johnson. His lordship was so good as to comply with my request, and has thus enabled me to enrich my work with a very fine piece of writing, which displays both the critical skill and politeness of my illustrious friend; and perhaps the curiosity which it will excite may induce the noble and elegant authour to gratify the world by the publication of a performance of which Dr. Johnson has spoken in such terms.

"TO MRS. CHAPONE.

"28th November, 1783.

"MADAM,—By sending the tragedy to me a second time[3], I think that a very honourable distinction has been shown me; and I did not delay the perusal, of which I am now to tell the effect.

"The construction of the play is not completely regular: the stage is too often vacant, and the scenes are not sufficiently connected. This, however, would be called by Dryden only a

[1] [Miss Mulso. See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 325.—ED.]

[2] A few copies only of this tragedy have been printed, and given to the authour's friends.—BOSWELL.

[3] Dr. Johnson having been very ill when the tragedy was first sent to him had declined the consideration of it.—BOSWELL.

mechanical defect; which takes away little from the power of the poem, and which is seen rather than felt.

"A rigid examiner of the diction might, perhaps, wish some words changed, and some lines more vigorously terminated. But from such petty imperfections what writer was ever free?

"The general form and force of the dialogue is of more importance. It seems to want that quickness of reciprocation which characterises the English drama, and is not always sufficiently fervid or animated.

"Of the sentiments, I remember not one that I wished omitted. In the imagery I cannot forbear to distinguish the comparison of joy, succeeding grief to light rushing on the eye accustomed to darkness [1]. It seems to have all that can be desired to make it please. It is new, just, and delightful.

"With the characters, either as conceived or preserved, I have no fault to find; but was much inclined to congratulate a writer who, in defiance of prejudice and fashion, made the archbishop a good man, and scorned all thoughtless applause, which a vicious churchman would have brought him.

"The catastrophe is affecting. The father and daughter both culpable, both wretched, and both penitent, divide between them our pity and our sorrow.

"Thus, madam, I have performed what I did not willingly undertake, and could not decently refuse. The noble writer will be pleased to remember that sincere criticism ought to raise no resentment, because judgment is not under the control of will; but involuntary criticism, as it has still less of choice, ought to be more remote from possibility of offence. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"London, 29th Nov. 1783.

"DEAR MADAM,—You may perhaps think me negligent that I have not written to you again upon the loss of your brother; but condolences and consolations are such common and such useless things, that the omission of them is no great crime; and my own diseases occupy my mind and engage my care. My nights are miserably restless, and my days, therefore, are heavy. I try, however, to hold up my head as high as I can.

[1] 'I could have borne my woes; that stranger Joy
Wounds while it smiles:—the long-imprison'd wretch,
Emerging from the night of his damp cell,
Shrinks from the sun's bright beams; and that which flings
Gladness o'er all to him is agony."—BOSWELL.

"I am sorry that your health is impaired: perhaps the spring and the summer may, in some degree, restore it; but if not, we must submit to the inconveniences of time, as to the other dispensations of Eternal Goodness. Pray for me, and write to me, or let Mr. Pearson write for you. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Reyn. MS. ["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"23d December, 1783.

"DEAREST MADAM,—You shall doubtless be very welcome to me on Christmas day. I shall not dine alone, but the company will all be people whom we can stay with or leave. I will expect you at three, if I hear no more. I am this day a little better. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"I mean, do not be later than three; for as I am afraid I shall not be at church, you cannot come too soon."]

I consulted him on two questions of a very different nature: one, Whether the unconstitutional influence exercised by the peers of Scotland in the election of the representatives of the commons, by means of fictitious qualifications, ought not to be resisted; the other, What in propriety and humanity should be done with old horses unable to labour. I gave him some account of my life at Auchinleck; and expressed my satisfaction that the gentlemen of the county had, at two publick meetings, elected me their *præses* or chairman.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 24th Dec. 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—Like all other men who have great friends, you begin to feel the pangs of neglected merit; and all the comfort that I can give you is, by telling you that you have probably more pangs to feel, and more neglect to suffer. You have, indeed, begun to complain too soon; and I hope I am the only confidant of your discontent. Your friends have not yet had leisure to gratify personal kindness; they have hitherto

been busy in strengthening their ministerial interest. If a vacancy happens in Scotland, give them early intelligence: and as you can serve government as powerfully as any of your probable competitors, you may make in some sort a warrantable claim.

"Of the exaltations and depressions of your mind you delight to talk, and I hate to hear. Drive all such fancies from you.

"On the day when I received your letter, I think, the foregoing page was written; to which one disease or another has hindered me from making any additions. I am now a little better. But sickness and solitude press me very heavily. I could bear sickness better, if I were relieved from solitude.

"The present dreadful confusion of the publick ought to make you wrap yourself up in your hereditary possessions, which, though less than you may wish, are more than you can want; and in an hour of religious retirement return thanks to God, who has exempted you from any strong temptation to faction, treachery, plunder, and disloyalty.

"As your neighbours distinguish you by such honours as they can bestow, content yourself with your station, without neglecting your profession. Your estate and the courts will find you full employment, and your mind well occupied will be quiet.

"The usurpation of the nobility, for they apparently usurp all the influence they gain by fraud and misrepresentation, I think it certainly lawful, perhaps your duty, to resist. What is not their own, they have only by robbery.

"Your question about the horses gives me more perplexity. I know not well what advice to give you. I can only recommend a rule which you do not want: give as little pain as you can. I suppose that we have a right to their service while their strength lasts; what we can do with them afterwards, I cannot so easily determine. But let us consider. Nobody denies that man has a right first to milk the cow, and to shear the sheep, and then to kill them for his table. May he not, by parity of reason, first work a horse, and then kill him the easiest way, that he may have the means of another horse, or food for cows and sheep? Man is influenced in both cases by different motives of self-interest. He that rejects the one must reject the other. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON.

"A happy and pious Christmas; and many happy years to you, your lady, and children."

The late ingenious Mr. Mickle, some time before his death, wrote me a letter concerning Dr. Johnson, in which he mentions, "I was upwards of twelve years acquainted with him, was frequently in his company, always talked with ease to him, and can truly say, that I never received from him one rough word."

In this letter he relates his having, while engaged in translating the Lusiad, had a dispute of considerable length with Johnson, who, as usual, declaimed upon the misery and corruption of a sea life, and used this expression:—"It had been happy for the world, sir, if your hero Gama, Prince Henry of Portugal, and Columbus, had never been born, or that their schemes had never gone farther than their own imaginations." "This sentiment," says Mr. Mickle, "which is to be found in his 'Introduction to the World Displayed,' I, in my Dissertation prefixed to the Lusiad, have controverted; and though authours are said to be bad judges of their own works, I am not ashamed to own to a friend, that that dissertation is my favourite above all that I ever attempted in prose. Next year, when the Lusiad was published, I waited on Dr. Johnson, who addressed me with one of his good-humoured smiles:—'Well, you have remembered our dispute about Prince Henry, and have cited me too. You have done your part very well indeed: you have made the best of your argument; but I am not convinced yet.'

"Before publishing the Lusiad, I sent Mr. Hoole a proof of that part of the introduction in which I make mention of Dr. Johnson, yourself, and other well-wishers to the work, begging it might be shown to Dr. Johnson. This was accordingly done; and in place of the simple mention of him which I had made,

he dictated to Mr. Hoole the sentence as it now stands.

"Dr. Johnson told me in 1772, that, about twenty years before that time, he himself had a design to translate the Lusiad, of the merit of which he spoke highly, but had been prevented by a number of other engagements."

Mr. Mickle reminds me in this letter of a conversation at dinner one day at Mr. Hoole's with Dr. Johnson, when Mr. Nicol, the king's bookseller, and I, attempted to controvert the maxim, "Better that ten guilty should escape, than one innocent person suffer," and were answered by Dr. Johnson with great power of reasoning and eloquence. I am very sorry that I have no record of that day: but I well recollect my illustrious friend's having ably shown, that unless civil institutions ensure protection to the innocent, all the confidence which mankind should have in them would be lost.

I shall here mention what, in strict chronological arrangement, should have appeared in my account of last year; but may more properly be introduced here, the controversy having not been closed till this. The Reverend Mr. Shaw [1], a native of one of the Hebrides, having entertained doubts of the authenticity of the poems ascribed to Ossian, divested himself of national bigotry; and having travelled in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and also in Ireland, in order to furnish himself with materials for a Gaelick Dictionary, which he afterwards compiled, was so fully satisfied that Dr. Johnson was in the right upon the question, that he candidly published a pamphlet, stating his conviction, and the proofs and reasons on which it was founded. A person at Edinburgh, of

[1] [See *ante*, p. 21. — Ed.]

the name of Clark, answered this pamphlet with much zeal, and much abuse of its authour. Johnson took Mr. Shaw under his protection, and gave him his assistance in writing a reply, which has been admired by the best judges, and by many been considered as conclusive. A few paragraphs, which sufficiently mark their great authour, shall be selected.

"My assertions are, for the most part, purely negative: I deny the existence of Fingal, because in a long and curious peregrination through the Gaelick regions I have never been able to find it. What I could not see myself, I suspect to be equally invisible to others; and I suspect with the more reason, as among all those who have seen it no man can show it.

"Mr. Clark compares the obstinacy of those who disbelieve the genuineness of Ossian to a blind man, who should dispute the reality of colours, and deny that the British troops are clothed in red. The blind man's doubt would be rational, if he did not know by experience that others have a power which he himself wants: but what perspicacity has Mr. Clark which Nature has withheld from me or the rest of mankind?

"The true state of the parallel must be this:—Suppose a man, with eyes like his neighbours, was told by a boasting corporal, that the troops, indeed, wore red clothes for their ordinary dress, but that every soldier had likewise a suit of black velvet, which he puts on when the king reviews them This he thinks strange, and desires to see the fine clothes, but finds nobody in forty thousand men that can produce either coat or waistcoat. One, indeed, has left them in his chest at Port Mahon; another has always heard that he ought to have velvet clothes somewhere; and a third has heard somebody say that soldiers ought to wear velvet. Can the inquirer be blamed if he goes away believing that a soldier's red coat is all that he has?

"But the most obdurate incredulity may be shamed or silenced by facts. To overpower contradictions, let the soldier show his velvet coat, and the Fingalist the original of Ossian.

"The difference between us and the blind man is this: the blind man is unconvinced, because he cannot see; and we because, though we can see, we find nothing that can be shown."

Notwithstanding the complication of disorders under which Johnson now laboured, he did not re-

sign himself to despondency and discontent, but with wisdom and spirit endeavoured to console and amuse his mind with as many innocent enjoyments as he could procure. Sir John Hawkins has mentioned the cordiality with which he insisted that such of the members of the old club in Ivy-lane as survived should meet again and dine together, which they did twice at a tavern, and once at his house.

["DR. JOHNSON TO SIR JOHN HAWKINS. Hawk. p. 561.

"Bolt-court, 22d Nov. 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—As Mr. Ryland was talking with me of old friends and past times, we warmed ourselves into a wish, that all who remained of the Club should meet and dine at the house which once was Horseman's, in Ivy-lane. I have undertaken to solicit you, and therefore desire you to tell on what day next week you can conveniently meet your old friends. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

The intended meeting was prevented by a circumstance, which the following note will explain:

"3d Dec. 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—In perambulating Ivy-lane, Mr. Ryland found neither our landlord Horseman nor his successor. The old house is shut up, and he liked not the appearance of any near it: he therefore bespoke our dinner at the Queen's Arms, in St. Paul's Churchyard, where, at half an hour after three, your company will be desired to-day by those who remain of our former society. Your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"With this invitation," says Sir John Hawkins, "I cheerfully complied, and met, at the time and place appointed, all who could be mustered of our society, namely, Johnson, Mr. Ryland, and Mr. Payne of the bank. When we were collected, the thought that we were so few occasioned some melancholy reflections, and I could not but compare our meeting, at such an advanced period of life as it was to us all, to that of the four old men in the 'Senile Colloquium' of Erasmus. We dined,

Hawk. p. 562. and in the evening regaled with coffee. At ten we broke up, much to the regret of Johnson, who proposed staying; but finding us inclined to separate, he left us, with a sigh that seemed to come from his heart, lamenting that he was retiring to solitude and cheerless meditation.

"Johnson had proposed a meeting like this once a month, and we had one more; but, the time approaching for a third, he began to feel a return of some of his complaints, and signified a wish that we would dine with him at his own house; and accordingly we met there, and were very cheerfully entertained by him."]

[Of this meeting he gave the following account to Mrs. Thrale:

Letters, vol. ii. p. 339.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"London, 13th December, 1783.

"I dined about a fortnight ago with three old friends. We had not met together for thirty years, and one of us thought the other grown very old. In the thirty years two of our set have died. Our meeting may be supposed to be somewhat tender."]

In order to ensure himself society in the evening for three days in the week, he instituted a club at the Essex Head, in Essex-street, then kept by Samuel Greaves, an old servant of Mr. Thrale's.

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"4th December, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—It is inconvenient to me to come out; I should else have waited on you with an account of a little evening club which we are establishing in Essex-street in the Strand, and of which you are desired to be one. It will be held at the Essex Head, now kept by an old servant of Thrale's. The company is numerous, and, as you will see by the list, miscellaneous. The terms are lax, and the expenses light. Mr. Barry was adopted by Dr. Brocklesby, who joined with me in forming the plan. We meet thrice a week, and he who misses forfeits twopence.

"If you are willing to become a member, draw a line under your name. Return the list. We meet for the first time on Monday at eight. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

It did not suit[1] Sir Joshua to be one of this club. But when I mention only Mr. Daines Barrington, Dr. Brocklesby, Mr. Murphy, Mr. John Nichols, Mr. Cooke[2], Mr. Joddrell, Mr. Paradise, Dr. Horseley, Mr. Windham[3], I shall sufficiently obviate the misrepresentation of it by Sir John Hawkins, as if it had been a low alehouse association[4], by which Johnson was degraded. Johnson himself, like his namesake Old Ben, composed the rules of his Club.

"RULES.

"To-day deep thoughts with me resolve to drench
In mirth, which after no repenting draws.—MILTON.

"The club shall consist of four and twenty.

"The meetings shall be on the Monday, Thursday, and Saturday of every week; but in the week before Easter there shall be no meeting.

"Every member is at liberty to introduce a friend once a week, but not oftener.

"Two members shall oblige themselves to attend in their turn every night from eight to ten, or to procure two to attend in their room.

[1] [Johnson himself, by the mention of *Barry* the painter, seems to have anticipated some reluctance on the part of Sir Joshua. Indeed, the violence of Barry's temper, and the absurdity of his conduct, rendered him no very agreeable companion; but towards Sir Joshua his behaviour had been particularly offensive.—ED.]

[2] [A biographical notice of Mr. Cooke, who died April 3, 1824, will be found in the Gentleman's Magazine for that month; and some account of Mr. Joddrel is given in Nichols's *Lit. Anec.* vol. viii.—ED.]

[3] I was in Scotland when this club was founded, and during all the winter. Johnson, however, declared I should be a member, and invented a word upon the occasion: "Boswell," said he, "is a very *clubable* man." When I came to town I was proposed by Mr. Barrington, and chosen. I believe there are few societies where there is better conversation or more decorum. Several of us resolved to continue it after our great founder was removed by death. Other members were added; and now, about eight years since that loss, we go on happily. Johnson's definition of a club, in this sense, in his Dictionary, is "An assembly of good fellows, meeting under certain conditions."—BOSWELL.

[4] [Miss Hawkins candidly says, "Boswell was well justified in his resentment of my father's designation of this as *a sixpenny club at an alehouse*. I am sorry my father permitted himself to be so pettish on the subject. Honestly speaking, I dare say he did not like being passed over."—*Mem.* vol. ii. p. 104. —ED.]

"Every member present at the club shall spend at least sixpence; and every member who stays away shall forfeit threepence.

"The master of the house shall keep an account of the absent members; and deliver to the president of the night a list of the forfeits incurred.

"When any member returns after absence, he shall immediately lay down his forfeits; which if he omits to do, the president shall require.

"There shall be no general reckoning, but every man shall adjust his own expenses.

"The night of indispensable attendance will come to every member once a month. Whoever shall for three months together omit to attend himself, or by substitution, nor shall make any apology in the fourth month, shall be considered as having abdicated the club.

"When a vacancy is to be filled, the name of the candidate, and of the member recommending him, shall stand in the club-room three nights. On the fourth he may be chosen by ballot; six members at least being present, and two-thirds of the ballot being in his favour; or the majority, should the numbers not be divisible by three.

"The master of the house shall give notice, six days before, to each of those members whose turn of necessary attendance is come.

"The notice may be in these words:—'Sir, On ——— the ——— of ———, will be your turn of presiding at the Essex Head. Your company is therefore earnestly requested.

"One penny shall be left by each member for the waiter."

In the end of this year he was seized with a spasmodic asthma of such violence, that he was confined to the house in great pain, being sometimes obliged to sit all night in his chair, a recumbent posture being so hurtful to his respiration, that he could not endure lying in bed; and there came upon him at the same time that oppressive and fatal disease, a dropsy. It was a very severe winter, which probably aggravated his complaints; and the solitude in which Mr. Levett and Mrs. Williams had left him rendered his life very gloomy. Mrs. Desmoulins, who still

lived, was herself so very ill, that she could contribute very little to his relief. He, however, had none of that unsocial shyness which we commonly see in people afflicted with sickness. He did not hide his head from the world, in solitary abstraction; he did not deny himself to the visits of his friends and acquaintances; but at all times, when he was not overcome by sleep, was as ready for conversation as in his best days.

And now I am arrived at the last year of the life of SAMUEL JOHNSON; a year in which, although passed in severe indisposition, he nevertheless gave many evidences of the continuance of those wonderous powers of mind which raised him so high in the intellectual world. His conversation and his letters of this year were in no respect inferiour to those of former years.

The following is a remarkable proof of his being alive to the most minute curiosities of literature.

"TO MR. DILLY, BOOKSELLER, IN THE POULTRY.

"6th, January, 1784.

"SIR,—There is in the world a set of books which used to be sold by the booksellers on the bridge, and which I must entreat you to procure me. They are called *Burton's Books*[1]:

[1] These books are much more numerous than Johnson supposed. The following list comprises several of them; but probably is incomplete:

1. Historical Rarities in London and Westminster 1681
2. Wars in England, Scotland, and Ireland 1681
3. Wonderful Prodigies of Judgment and Mercy 1681
4. Strange and prodigious religious Customs and Manners of sundry Nations 1683
5. English Empire in America 1685
6. Surprising Miracles of Nature and Art 1685
   [Admirable Curiosities of Nature, &c. 1681.—Probably the same book with a different title.]
7. History of Scotland 1685
8. History of Ireland 1685
9. Two Journies to Jerusalem 1685
10. Nine Worthies of the World 1687
11. Winter's Evenings' Entertainments 1687
12. The English Hero, or the Life of Sir Francis Drake . . . 1687
13. Memorable Accidents and unheard-of Transactions . . . 1693
14. History of the House of Orange 1693
15. Burton's Acts of the Martyrs (or, of Martyrs in Flames) . . 1695
16. Curiosities of England 1697

the title of one is 'Admirable Curiosities, Rarities, and Wonders in England.' I believe there are about five or six of them; they seem very proper to allure backward readers; be so kind as to get them for me, and send me them with the best printed edition of 'Baxter's Call to the Unconverted.' I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. PERKINS.

"21st January, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I was very sorry not to see you, when you were so kind as to call on me; but to disappoint friends, and if they are not very good-natured, to disoblige them, is one of the evils of sickness. If you will please to let me know which of the afternoons in this week I shall be favoured with another visit by you and Mrs. Perkins, and the young people, I will take all the measures that I can to be pretty well at that time. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

His attention to the Essex-Head Club appears from the following letter to Mr. Alderman Clark, a gentleman for whom he deservedly entertained a great regard [1].

"TO RICHARD CLARK, ESQ.

"27th January, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—You will receive a requisition, according to the rules of the club, to be at the house as president of the

17.	History of Oliver Cromwell	1698
18.	Unparalleled Varieties	1699
19.	Unfortunate Court Favourites of England	1706
20.	History of the Lives of English Divines	1709
21.	Ingenious Riddles	——
22.	Unhappy Princesses, or the History of Anne Boleyn and Lady Jane Gray	1710
23.	Æsop's Fables, in prose and verse	1712
24.	History of Virginia	1722
25.	English Acquisitions in Guinea and the East Indies	1726
26.	Female Excellency, or the Ladies' Glory	1728
27.	General History of Earthquakes	1736
28.	The English Heroine, or the Life and Adventures of Mrs. Christian Davies, commonly called Mother Ross	——
29.	Youth's Divine Pastime	——

MALONE.

[1] [As this sheet is passing through the press, the Editor learns the death of his venerable friend, Mr. Clark, who had kindly contributed some information to the foregoing volumes. He died at Chertsey on the 16th January, 1831, æt. 93.—ED.]

night. This turn comes once a month, and the member is obliged to attend, or send another in his place. You were inrolled in the club by my invitation, and I ought to introduce you; but as I am hindered by sickness, Mr. Hoole will very properly supply my place as introductor, or yours as president. I hope in milder weather to be a very constant attendant. I am, sir, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON.

"You ought to be informed that the forfeits began with the year, and that every night of non-attendance incurs the mulct of threepence, that is, ninepence a-week."

On the 8th of January I wrote to him, anxiously inquiring as to his health, and enclosing my "Letter to the People of Scotland on the Present State of the Nation." "I trust," said I, "that you will be liberal enough to make allowance for my differing from you on two points, [the Middlesex election and the American war,] when my general principles of government are according to your own heart, and when, at a crisis of doubtful event, I stand forth with honest zeal as an ancient and faithful Briton. My reason for introducing those two points was, that as my opinions with regard to them had been declared at the periods when they were least favourable, I might have the credit of a man who is not a worshipper of ministerial power."

["MR. BOSWELL TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. Reyn. MSS.

"Edinburgh, 6th February, 1784.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I long exceedingly to hear from you. Sir William Forbes brought me good accounts of you, and Mr. Temple sent me very pleasing intelligence concerning the fair *Palmeria*[1]. But a line or two from yourself is the next thing to seeing you.

"My anxiety about Dr. Johnson is truly great. I had a letter from him within these six weeks, written with his usual acuteness and vigour of mind. But he complained sadly of the state of his health; and I have been informed since that he is

[1] [No doubt Miss Palmer, afterwards Lady Thomond, Sir Joshua's niece.—ED.]

Reyn. MSS. worse. I intend to be in London next month, chiefly to attend upon him with respectful affection. But, in the mean time, it will be a great favour done me, if you, who know him so well, will be kind enough to let me know particularly how he is.

"I hope Mr. Dilly conveyed to you my Letter on the State of the Nation, *from the Authour*. I know your political principles, and indeed your settled system of thinking upon civil society and subordination, to be according to my own heart, and therefore I doubt not you will approve of my honest zeal. But what monstrous effects of party do we now see! I am really vexed at the conduct of some of our friends[1].

"Amidst the conflict our friend of Port Elliot is with much propriety created a peer. But why, O why did he not obtain the title of Baron *Mahogany*[2]? Genealogists and heralds would have had curious work of it to explain and illustrate that title. I ever am, with sincere regard, my dear sir, your affectionate humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."]

"DR. JOHNSON TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"11th February, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I hear of many inquiries which your kindness has disposed you to make after me. I have long intended you a long letter, which perhaps the imagination of its length hindered me from beginning. I will, therefore, content myself with a shorter.

"Having promoted the institution of a new club in the neighbourhood, at the house of an old servant of Thrale's, I went thither to meet the company, and was seized with a spasmodick asthma, so violent, that with difficulty I got to my own house, in which I have been confined eight or nine weeks, and from which I know not when I shall be able to go even to church. The asthma, however, is not the worst. A dropsy gains ground upon me: my legs and thighs are very much swollen with water, which I should be content if I could keep there; but I am afraid that it will soon be higher. My nights are very sleepless and very tedious. And yet I am extremely afraid of dying.

"My physicians try to make me hope, that much of my malady is the effect of cold, and that some degree at least of recovery is to be expected from vernal breezes and summer suns. If my life is prolonged to autumn, I should be glad to try a warmer climate; though how to travel with a diseased body,

[1] [Messrs. Fox and Burke.—ED.]
[2] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 449.—ED.]

without a companion to conduct me, and with very little money, I do not well see. Ramsay has recovered his limbs in Italy; and Fielding was sent to Lisbon, where, indeed, he died; but he was, I believe, past hope when he went. Think for me what I can do."

"I received your pamphlet, and when I write again may perhaps tell you some opinion about it; but you will forgive a man struggling with disease his neglect of disputes, politicks, and pamphlets. Let me have your prayers. My compliments to your lady, and young ones. Ask your physicians about my case: and desire Sir Alexander Dick to write me his opinion. I am, dear sir, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

["A few days after the remnant of the Ivy-lane Club had dined with him," says Sir John Hawkins, "he sent for me, and informed me, that he had discovered in himself the symptoms of a dropsy, which, indeed, his very much increased bulk, and the swollen appearance of his legs, seemed to indicate. He told me, that he was desirous of making a will, and requested me to be one of his executors: upon my consenting, he gave me to understand, that he meant to make a provision for his servant, Frank, of about 70*l.* a year for life, and concerted with me a plan for investing a sum sufficient for the purpose: at the same time he stated his circumstances, and the amount of what he had to dispose of." Hawk. p. 563.

"In a visit which I made him in a few days, in consequence of a very pressing request to see me, I found him labouring under great dejection of mind. He bade me draw near him, and said, he wanted to enter into a serious conversation with me; and, upon my expressing a willingness to join in it, he, with a look that cut me to the heart, told me, that he had the prospect of death before him, and that he dreaded to meet his Saviour. I could not but be astonished at such a declaration, and advised him, as I had done once before, to reflect on the course of his life, and the services he had rendered to the cause of religion

Hawk. p. 564. and virtue, as well by his example as his writings; to which he answered, that he had written as a philosopher, but had not lived like one. In the estimation of his offences, he reasoned thus: 'Every man knows his own sins, and also what grace he has resisted. But, to those of others, and the circumstances under which they were committed, he is a stranger: he is, therefore, to look on himself as the greatest sinner that he knows of.' At the conclusion of this argument, which he strongly enforced, he uttered this passionate exclamation,—"Shall I, who have been a teacher of others, myself be a castaway?"

"Much to the same purpose passed between us in this and other conversations that I had with him, in all which I could not but wonder, [illegible]uch at the freedom with which he opened his mind, and the compunction he seemed to feel for the errors of his past life, as I did, at his making choice of me for his confessor, knowing full well how meanly qualified I was for such an office."

"It was on a Thursday[1] that I had this conversation with him; and here let not the supercilious lip of scorn protrude itself, while I relate that he declared his intention to devote the whole of the next day to fasting, humiliation, and such other devotional exercises as became a man in his situation. On the Saturday following, I made him a visit, and, upon entering his room, observed in his countenance such a serenity, as indicated that some remarkable crisis of his disorder had produced a change in his feelings. He told me, that, pursuant to his resolution, he had spent the preceding day in an abstraction from all worldly concerns; that, to prevent interruption, he had, in the morning, ordered Frank not to admit

[1] [It appears from Johnson's own letters that the event itself took place on Thursday, 19th February.—ED.]

any one to him, and, the better to enforce the charge, had added these awful words, 'For your master is preparing himself to die.' He then mentioned to me, that, in the course of this exercise, he found himself relieved from that disorder which had been growing on him, and was become very oppressing, the dropsy, by a gradual evacuation of water to the amount of twenty pints, a like instance whereof he had never before experienced; and asked me what I thought of it." Hawk. p. 565.

"I was well aware of the lengths that superstition and enthusiasm will lead men, and how ready some are to attribute favourable events to supernatural causes, and said, that it might savour of presumption to say that in this instance, God had wrought a miracle; yet, as divines recognise certain dispensations of his providence, recorded in the Scripture by the denomination of returns of prayer, and his omnipotence is now the same as ever, I thought it would be little less than criminal to ascribe his late relief to causes merely natural, and that the safer opinion was, that he had not in vain humbled himself before his Maker. He seemed to acquiesce in all that I said on this important subject, and, several times, while I was discoursing with him, cried out, 'It is wonderful, very wonderful[1]!'

"His zeal for religion, as manifested in his writings and conversation, and the accounts extant that attest his piety, have induced the enemies to his memory to tax him with superstition. To that charge I oppose his behaviour on this occasion, and leave it to the judgment of sober and rational persons, whether such an unexpected event as that above mentioned would

[1] [I have given Sir John Hawkins's account of this extraordinary circumstance, although Mr. Boswell relates it also (*post*, *sub* 5th May), both because Hawkins tells it rather more distinctly, and that it is desirable to produce all possible confirmation of such a fact.—ED.]

Hawk. p. 566. not have prompted a really superstitious man to some more passionate exclamation than that it was 'wonderful.'"]

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"23d February, 1784.

"MY DEAREST LOVE,—I have been extremely ill of an asthma and dropsy, but received by the mercy of God sudden and unexpected relief last Thursday, by the discharge of twenty pints of water. Whether I shall continue free, or shall fill again, cannot be told. Pray for me.

"Death, my dear, is very dreadful; let us think nothing worth our care but how to prepare for it: what we know amiss in ourselves let us make haste to amend, and put our trust in the mercy of God and the intercession of our Saviour. I am, dear madam, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 27th Feb. 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I have just advanced so far towards recovery as to read a pamphlet; and you may reasonably suppose that the first pamphlet which I read was yours. I am very much of your opinion, and, like you, feel great indignation at the indecency with which the king is every day treated. Your paper contains very considerable knowledge of history and of the constitution, very properly produced and applied. It will certainly raise your character [1], though perhaps it may not make you a minister of state.

* * * * * * *

"I desire you to see Mrs. Stewart once again, and tell her,

[1] ["Letter to the People of Scotland on the present State of the Nation."] I sent it to Mr. Pitt, with a letter, in which I thus expressed myself: "My principles may appear to you too monarchical; but I know and am persuaded they are not inconsistent with the true principles of liberty. Be this as it may, you, sir, are now the prime minister, called by the sovereign to maintain the rights of the crown, as well as those of the people, against a violent faction. As such, you are entitled to the warmest support of every good subject in every department." He answered, "I am extremely obliged to you for the sentiments you do me the honour to express, and have observed with great pleasure the *zealous and able support* given to the cause of the publick in the work you were so good to transmit to me."—BOSWELL. [One cannot but smile at Mr. Boswell's apology to Mr. Pitt for appearing *too monarchical*. Mr. Pitt, it will be recollected, had (after a short parliamentary life, in which he had shown a disposition to whig principles) lately become prime minister, on the dismissal of the celebrated *Coalition* administration.—ED.]

that in the letter-case was a letter relating to me, for which I will give her, if she is willing to give it me, another guinea. The letter is of consequence only to me [1]. I am, dear sir, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

In consequence of Johnson's request that I should ask our physicians about his case, and desire Sir Alexander Dick to send his opinion, I transmitted him a letter from that very amiable baronet, then in his eighty-first year, with his faculties as entire as ever, and mentioned his expressions to me in the note accompanying it,—"With my most affectionate wishes for Dr. Johnson's recovery, in which his friends, his country, and all mankind have so deep a stake;" and at the same time a full opinion upon his case by Dr. Gillespie, who, like Dr. Cullen, had the advantage of having passed through the gradations of surgery and pharmacy, and by study and practice had attained to such skill, that my father settled on him two hundred pounds a year for five years, and fifty pounds a year during his life, as an *honorarium* to secure his particular attendance. The opinion was conveyed in a letter to me, beginning, "I am sincerely sorry for the bad state of health your very learned and illustrious friend, Dr. Johnson, labours under at present."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 2d March, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Presently after I had sent away my last letter, I received your kind medical packet. I am very much obliged both to you and to your physicians for your kind attention to my disease. Dr. Gillespie has sent me an excellent *consilium medicum*, all solid practical experimental knowledge. I am at present, in the opinion of my physicians (Dr. Heberden and

[1] [The letter was probably lost. Mr. Boswell could else have hardly failed to inform us what it related to. It is clear that Johnson set a good deal of value upon it, for he mentions it again yet more earnestly in another letter, 18th March. 1784.—ED.]

Dr. Brocklesby), as well as my own, going on very hopefully. I have just begun to take vinegar of squills. The powder hurt my stomach so much that it could not be continued.

"Return Sir Alexander Dick my sincere thanks for his kind letter; and bring with you the rhubarb[1] which he so tenderly offers me.

"I hope dear Mrs. Boswell is now quite well, and that no evil, either real or imaginary, now disturbs you. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

I also applied to three of the eminent physicians who had chairs in our celebrated school of medicine at Edinburgh, Doctors Cullen, Hope, and Monro, to each of whom I sent the following letter:

"7th March, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Dr. Johnson has been very ill for some time; and in a letter of anxious apprehension he writes to me, 'Ask your physicians about my case.'

"This, you see, is not authority for a regular consultation: but I have no doubt of your readiness to give your advice to a man so eminent, and who, in his Life of Garth, has paid your profession a just and elegant compliment: 'I believe every man has found in physicians great liberality and dignity of sentiment, very prompt effusions of beneficence, and willingness to exert a lucrative art where there is no hope of lucre.'

"Dr. Johnson is aged seventy-four. Last summer he had a stroke of the palsy, from which he recovered almost entirely. He had, before that, been troubled with a catarrhous cough. This winter he was seized with a spasmodick asthma, by which he has been confined to his house for about three months. Dr. Brocklesby writes to me, that upon the least admission of cold, there is such a constriction upon his breast, that he cannot lie down in his bed; but is obliged to sit up all night, and gets rest, and sometimes sleep, only by means of laudanum and syrup of poppies; and that there are œdematous tumours in his legs and thighs. Dr. Brocklesby trusts a good deal to the return of mild weather. Dr. Johnson says that a dropsy gains ground upon him; and he seems to think that a warmer climate would

[1] From his garden at Prestonfield, where he cultivated that plant with such success, that he was presented with a gold medal by the Society of London for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce.—BOSWELL.

do him good. I understand he is now rather better, and is using vinegar of squills. I am, with great esteem, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."

All of them paid the most polite attention to my letter and its venerable object. Dr. Cullen's words concerning him were, "It would give me the greatest pleasure to be of any service to a man whom the publick properly esteem, and whom I esteem and respect as much as I do Dr. Johnson." Dr. Hope's, "Few people have a better claim on me than your friend, as hardly a day passes that I do not ask his opinion about this or that word." Dr. Monro's, "I most sincerely join you in sympathizing with that very worthy and ingenious character, from whom his country has derived much instruction and entertainment."

Dr. Hope corresponded with his friend Dr. Brocklesby. Doctors Cullen and Monro wrote their opinions and prescriptions to me, which I afterwards carried with me to London, and, so far as they were encouraging, communicated to Johnson. The liberality on one hand, and grateful sense of it on the other, I have great satisfaction in recording.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER. Pearson MSS.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 10th March, 1784.

"MY DEAREST LOVE,—I will not suppose that it is for want of kindness that you did not answer my last letter; and I therefore write again to tell you that I have, by God's great mercy, still continued to grow better. My asthma is seldom troublesome, and my dropsy has ran itself almost away, in a manner which my physician says is very uncommon.

"I have been confined from the 14th of December, and shall not soon venture abroad; but I have this day dressed myself as I was before my sickness.

"If it be inconvenient to you to write, desire Mr. Pearson to let me know how you do, and how you have passed this long

winter. I am now not without hopes that we shall once more see one another.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Cobb and Miss Adey, and to all my friends, particularly to Mr. Pearson. I am, my dear, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Pemb. MS. "DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. GASTRELL AND MISS ASTON.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, London, 11th March, 1784.

"DEAR LADIES,—The kind and speedy answer with which you favoured me to my last letter encourages me to hope that you will be glad to hear again that my recovery advances. My disorders are an asthma and dropsy. The asthma gives me no great trouble when I am not in motion, and the water of the dropsy has passed away in so happy a manner, by the goodness of God, as Dr. Heberden declares himself not to have known more than four times in all his practice. I have been confined to the house from December the 14th, and shall not venture out till the weather is settled; but I have this day dressed myself as before I became ill. Join with me in returning thanks, and pray for me that the time now granted me may not be ill spent.

"Let me now, dear ladies, have some account of you. Tell me how you have endured this long and sharp winter, and give me hopes that we may all meet again with kindness and cheerfulness. I am, dear ladies, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 18th March, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I am too much pleased with the attention which you and your dear lady.[1] show to my welfare, not to be diligent in letting you know the progress which I make towards health. The dropsy, by God's blessing, has now run almost totally away by natural evacuation: and the asthma, if not irritated by cold, gives me little trouble. While I am writing this I have not any sensation of debility or disease; But I do not yet venture out, having been confined to the house from the 13th of December, now a quarter of a year.

"When it will be fit for me to travel as far as Auchinleck I am not able to guess; but such a letter as Mrs. Boswell's might draw any man not wholly motionless a great way. Pray tell

[1] Who had written him a very kind letter.—BOSWELL.

the dear lady how much her civility and kindness have touched and gratified me.

"Our parliamentary tumults have now begun to subside, and the king's authority is in some measure re-established. Mr. Pitt will have great power[1]; but you must remember that what he has to give must, at least for some time, be given to those who gave, and those who preserve, his power. A new minister can sacrifice little to esteem or friendship: he must, till he is settled, think only of extending his interest.

* * * * * * *

"If you come hither through Edinburgh, send for Mrs. Stewart, and give from me another guinea for the letter in the old case, to which I shall not be satisfied with my claim till she gives it me.

"Please to bring with you Baxter's Anacreon; and if you procure heads of Hector Boece, the historian, and Arthur Johnston[2], the poet, I will put them in my room; or any other of the fathers of Scottish literature.

"I wish you an easy and happy journey, and hope I need not tell you that you will be welcome to, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. THRALE. Letters, vol. ii. p. 354.

"London, 20th March, 1784.

"MADAM,—Your last letter had something of tenderness. The accounts which you have had of my danger and distress were I suppose not aggravated. I have been confined ten weeks with an asthma and dropsy. But I am now better. God has in his mercy granted me a reprieve; for how much time his mercy must determine.

"On the 19th of last month I evacuated twenty pints of water, and I think I reckon exactly. From that time the tumour has subsided, and I now begin to move with some freedom. You will easily believe that I am still at a great distance from health; but I am, as my chirurgeon expressed it, amazingly better. Heberden seems to have great hopes.

"Write to me no more about *dying with a grace*. When you feel what I have felt in approaching eternity—in fear of soon hearing the sentence of which there is no revocation—you will know the folly: my wish is that you may know it sooner. The

[1] [Mr. Boswell does not give us *his* letter, to which this is an answer; but it is clear that he expressed some too sanguine hopes of preferment from Mr. Pitt, whose favour, as we have just seen, he had endeavoured to propitiate. See *ante*, p. 153, *n.*—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 328.—ED.]

distance between the grave and the remotest part of human longevity is but a very little; and of that little no path is certain. You know all this, and I thought that I knew it too; but I know it now with a new conviction. May that new conviction not be vain!

"I am now cheerful. I hope this approach to recovery is a token of the Divine mercy. My friends continue their kindness. I give a dinner to-morrow. I am, madam, your, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

I wrote to him, March 28, from York, informing him that I had a high gratification in the triumph of monarchical principles over aristocratical influence, in that great county, in an address to the king; that I was thus far on my way to him, but that news of the dissolution of parliament having arrived, I was to hasten back to my own county, where I had carried an address to his majesty by a great majority, and had some intention of being a candidate to represent the county in parliament.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 30th March, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—You could do nothing so proper as to hasten back when you found the parliament dissolved. With the influence which your address must have gained you, it may reasonably be expected that your presence will be of importance, and your activity of effect.

"Your solicitude for me gives me that pleasure which every man feels from the kindness of such a friend; and it is with delight I relieve it by telling that Dr. Brocklesby's account is true, and that I am, by the blessing of God, wonderfully relieved.

"You are entering upon a transaction which requires much prudence. You must endeavour to oppose without exasperating; to practise temporary hostility, without producing enemies for life. This is, perhaps, hard to be done; yet it has been done by many, and seems most likely to be effected by opposing merely upon general principles, without descending to personal or particular censures or objections. One thing I must enjoin you, which is seldom observed in the conduct of elections; I must entreat you to be scrupulous in the use of

strong liquors. One night's drunkenness may defeat the labours of forty days well employed. Be firm, but not clamorous; be active, but not malicious; and you may form such an interest, as may not only exalt yourself, but dignify your family.

"We are, as you may suppose, all busy here. Mr. Fox resolutely stands for Westminster, and his friends say will carry the election[1]. However that be, he will certainly have a seat. Mr. Hoole has just told me, that the city leans towards the king.

"Let me hear, from time to time, how you are employed, and what progress you make.

"Make dear Mrs. Boswell, and all the young Boswells, the sincere compliments of, sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

To Mr. Langton he wrote with that cordiality which was suitable to the long friendship which had subsisted between him and that gentleman.

"DR. JOHNSON TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"27th March, 1784.

"Since you left me I have continued, in my own opinion, and in Dr. Brocklesby's, to grow better, with respect to all my formidable and dangerous distempers; though, to a body battered and shaken as mine has lately been, it is to be feared that weak attacks may be sometimes mischievous. I have, indeed, by standing carelessly at an open window, got a very troublesome cough, which it has been necessary to appease by opium, in larger quantities than I like to take, and I have not found it give way so readily as I expected: its obstinacy, however, seems at last disposed to submit to the remedy, and I know not whether I should then have a right to complain of any morbid sensation. My asthma is, I am afraid, constitutional and incurable; but it is only occasional, and, unless it be excited by labour or by cold, gives me no molestation, nor does it lay very close siege to life; for Sir John Floyer, whom the physical race consider as authour of one of the best books upon it, panted on to ninety, as was supposed. And why were we content with supposing a fact so interesting of a man so conspicuous? Because he corrupted, at perhaps seventy or eighty, the register, that he might pass for younger than he was. He was not much

[1] [Mr. Fox was returned for Westminster, after a sharp election and a tedious scrutiny.—ED.]

less than eighty, when to a man of rank, who modestly asked his age, he answered, 'Go look;' though he was in general a man of civility and elegance.

"The ladies, I find, are at your house all well, except Miss Langton, who will probably soon recover her health by light suppers. Let her eat at dinner as she will, but not take a full stomach to bed. Pay my sincere respects to dear Miss Langton in Lincolnshire; let her know that I mean not to break our league of friendship, and that I have a set of Lives for her, when I have the means of sending it."

"8th April.

"I am still disturbed by my cough; but what thanks have I not to pay, when my cough is the most painful sensation that I feel? and from that I expect hardly to be released, while winter continues to gripe us with so much pertinacity. The year has now advanced eighteen days beyond the equinox, and still there is very little remission of the cold. When warm weather comes, which surely must come at last, I hope it will help both me and your young lady.

"The man so busy about addresses is neither more nor less than our own Boswell, who had come as far as York towards London, but turned back on the dissolution, and is said now to stand for some place. Whether to wish him success his best friends hesitate.

"Let me have your prayers for the completion of my recovery. I am now better than I ever expected to have been. May God add to his mercies the grace that may enable me to use them according to his will. My compliments to all."

"13th April.

"I had this evening a note from Lord Portmore, desiring that I would give you an account of my health. You might have had it with less circumduction. I am, by God's blessing, I believe, free from all morbid sensations, except a cough, which is only troublesome. But I am still weak, and can have no great hope of strength till the weather shall be softer. The summer, if it be kindly, will, I hope, enable me to support the winter. God, who has so wonderfully restored me, can preserve me in all seasons.

"Let me inquire in my turn after the state of your family, great and little. I hope Lady Rothes and Miss Langton are both well. That is a good basis of content. Then how goes George on with his studies? How does Miss Mary? And how does my own Jenny? I think I owe Jenny a letter, which I

will take care to pay. In the mean time tell her that I acknowledge the debt.

"Be pleased to make my compliments to the ladies. If Mrs. Langton comes to London, she will favour me with a visit, for I am not well enough to go out."

To Lord Portmore's note, mentioned in the foregoing extract, Johnson returned this answer:

"TO THE RIGHT HON. EARL OF PORTMORE.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 13th April, 1784.

"Dr. Johnson acknowledges with great respect the honour of Lord Portmore's notice. He is better than he was; and will, as his lordship directs, write to Mr. Langton."

"TO OZIAS HUMPHRY, ESQ.[1]

"5th April, 1784.

"Sir,—Mr. Hoole has told me with what benevolence you listened to a request which I was almost afraid to make, of leave to a young painter[2] to attend you from time to time in your painting-room, to see your operations, and receive your instructions.

"The young man has perhaps good parts, but has been without a regular education. He is my godson, and therefore I interest myself in his progress and success, and shall think myself much favoured if I receive from you a permission to send him.

"My health is, by God's blessing, much restored, but I am not yet allowed by my physicians to go abroad; nor, indeed, do I think myself yet able to endure the weather. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "Sam. Johnson."

[1] The eminent painter, representative of the ancient family of Homfrey (now Humphry) in the west of England; who, as appears from their arms which they have invariably used, have been (as I have seen authenticated by the best authority) one of those among the knights and esquires of honour, who are represented by Holinshed as having issued from the tower of London on coursers apparelled for the justes, accompanied by ladies of honour, leading every one a knight, with a chain of gold, passing through the streets of London into Smithfield, on Sunday, at three o'clock in the afternoon, being the first Sunday after Michaelmas, in the fourteenth year of King Richard the Second. This family once enjoyed large possessions, but, like others, have lost them in the progress of ages. Their blood, however, remains to them well ascertained; and they may hope, in the revolution of events, to recover that rank in society for which, in modern times, fortune seems to be an indispensable requisite.—Boswell. [Mr. Humphry died in 1810, æt. 68. His "*eminence*" as a painter was a good-natured error of Mr. Boswell's.—Ed.]

[2] Son of Mr. Samuel Paterson, eminent for his knowledge of books.—Boswell. [See *ante*, p. 108.—Ed.]

"TO THE SAME.

"10th April, 1784.

"SIR,—The bearer is my godson, whom I take the liberty of recommending to your kindness; which I hope he will deserve by his respect to your excellence, and his gratitude for your favours. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"12th April, 1784.

Reyn. MSS. "DEAR MADAM,—I am not yet able to wait on you, but I can do your business commodiously enough. You must send me the copy to show the printer. If you will come to tea this afternoon, we will talk together about it. Pray send me word whether you will come. I am, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

"TO OZIAS HUMPHRY, ESQ.

"31st May, 1784.

"SIR,—I am very much obliged by your civilities to my godson, but must beg of you to add to them the favour of permitting him to see you paint, that he may know how a picture is begun, advanced, and completed.

"If he may attend you in a few of your operations, I hope he will show that the benefit has been properly conferred, both by his proficiency and his gratitude. At least I shall consider you as enlarging your kindness to, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REVEREND DR. TAYLOR, ASHBOURNE.

"London, Easter-Monday, 12th April, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—What can be the reason that I hear nothing from you? I hope nothing disables you from writing. What I have seen, and what I have felt, gives me reason to fear every thing. Do not omit giving me the comfort of knowing, that after all my losses, I have yet a friend left.

"I want every comfort. My life is very solitary and very cheerless. Though it has pleased God wonderfully to deliver me from the dropsy, I am yet very weak, and have not passed the door since the 13th of December. I hope for some help from warm weather, which will surely come in time.

"I could not have the consent of the physicians to go to church yesterday; I therefore received the holy sacrament at home, in the room where I communicated with dear Mrs. Williams, a little before her death. O! my friend, the approach

of death is very dreadful! I am afraid to think on that which I know I cannot avoid. It is vain to look round and round for that help which cannot be had. Yet we hope and hope, and fancy that he who has lived to-day may live to-morrow. But let us learn to derive our hope only from God.

"In the mean time, let us be kind to one another. I have no friend now living but you[1] and Mr. Hector, that was the friend of my youth. Do not neglect, dear sir, yours affectionately, "SAM. JOHNSON."

["TO MRS. THRALE. Letters, vol. ii. p. 361.

"London, 15th April, 1784.

"Yesterday I had the pleasure of giving another dinner to the remainder of the old club. We used to meet weekly about the year 1750, and we were as cheerful as in former times: only I could not make quite so much noise; for since the paralytick affliction, my voice is sometimes weak.

"Metcalf and Crutchley, without knowing each other, are both members of parliament for Horsham in Sussex. Mr. Cator is chosen for Ipswich.

"But a sick man's thoughts soon turn back upon himself. I am still very weak, though my appetite is keen, and my digestion potent; and I gratify myself more at table than ever I did at my own cost before. I have now an inclination to luxury which even your table did not excite; for till now my *talk* was more about the dishes than my *thoughts*. I remember you commended me for seeming pleased with my dinners when you had reduced your table. I am able to tell you with great veracity that I never knew when the reduction began, nor should have known that it was made had not you told me. I now think and consult to-day what I shall eat to-morrow. This disease will likewise, I hope, be cured. For there are other things—how different!—which ought to predominate in the mind of such a man as I: but in this world the body will have its part; and my hope is, that it shall have no more—my hope, but not my confidence; I have only the timidity of a christian to determine, not the wisdom of a stoick to secure me."

"London, 19th April, 1784.

"I received this morning your magnificent fish, and in the afternoon your apology for not sending it. I have invited the Hooles and Miss Burney to dine upon it to-morrow. p. 363.

[1] This friend of Johnson's youth survived him somewhat more than three years, having died February 19, 1788.—MALONE.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 363.

"The club which has been lately instituted is at Sam's; and there was I when I was last out of the house. But the people whom I mentioned in my letter are the remnant of a little club[1] that used to meet in Ivy-lane about three and thirty years ago, out of which we have lost Hawkesworth and Dyer—the rest are yet on this side the grave."

"London, 21st April, 1784.

p. 365. "I make haste to send you intelligence, which, if I do not flatter myself, you will not receive without some degree of pleasure. After a confinement of one hundred and twenty-nine days, more than the third part of a year, and no inconsiderable part of human life, I this day returned thanks to God in St. Clement's church for my recovery; a recovery, in my seventy-fifth year, from a distemper which few in the vigour of youth are known to surmount; a recovery, of which neither myself, my friends, nor my physicians, had any hope; for though they flattered me with some continuance of life, they never supposed that I could cease to be dropsical. The dropsy, however, is quite vanished; and the asthma so much mitigated, that I walked to day with a more easy respiration than I have known, I think, for perhaps two years past. I hope the mercy that lightens my days will assist me to use them well.

"The Hooles, Miss Burney, and Mrs. Hall (Wesley's sister), feasted yesterday with me very cheerfully on your noble salmon. Mr. Allen could not come, and I sent him a piece, and a great tail is still left.

"Dr. Brocklesby forbids the club at present, not caring to venture the chillness of the evening; but I purpose to show myself on Saturday at the Academy's feast[2]. I cannot publish my return to the world more effectually; for, as the Frenchman says, *tout le monde s'y trouvera.*

"For this occasion I ordered some clothes; and was told by the tailor, that when he brought me a sick dress, he never expected to make me any thing of any other kind. My recovery is indeed wonderful."

"London, 26th April, 1784.

p. 367. "On Saturday I showed myself again to the living world at the Exhibition: much and splendid was the company, but, like the Doge of Genoa at Paris, I admired nothing but my-

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 163.—Ed.]
[2] [The Exhibition dinner of the Royal Academy.—Ed.]

self. I went up all the stairs to the pictures without stopping to rest or to breathe, Letters, vol. ii. p. 367.

'In all the madness of superfluous health.'

"The Prince of Wales had promised to be there; but when we had waited an hour and a half, sent us word that he could not come.

"Mrs. Davenant[1] called to pay me a guinea, but I gave two for you. Whatever reasons you have for frugality, it is not worth while to save a guinea a year by withdrawing it from a public charity.

"Mr. Howard called on me a few days ago, and gave me the new edition, much enlarged, of his Account of Prisons. He has been to survey the prisons on the continent; and in Spain he tried to penetrate the dungeons of the Inquisition, but his curiosity was very imperfectly gratified. At Madrid, they shut him quite out; at Valladolid, they showed him some public rooms."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

"London, 26th April, 1784.

"MY DEAR,—I write to you now, to tell you that I am so far recovered that on the 21st I went to church to return thanks, after a confinement of more than four long months.

"My recovery is such as neither myself nor the physicians at all expected, and is such as that very few examples have been known of the like. Join with me, my dear love, in returning thanks to God.

"Dr. Vyse has been with (me) this evening; he tells me that you likewise have been much disordered, but that you are now better. I hope that we shall sometime have a cheerful interview. In the mean time let us pray for one another. I am, madam, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS. Reyn. MSS.

"Bolt-court, 30th April, 1784.

"DEAR MADAM,—Mr. Allen has looked over the papers[2], and thinks that one hundred copies will come to five pounds.

[1] [Probably a cousin of Mrs. Thrale's, Hester Lynch Salusbury Cotton, married to Mr. Davenant, who afterwards assumed the name of Corbet, and was created a baronet.—ED.]

[2] [Perhaps Miss Reynolds's "Essay on Taste." See *ante*, p. 3. Mr. Boswell was probably mistaken in saying that it had been printed.—ED.]

Reyn. MSS. "Fifty will cost 4*l.* 10*s.*, and five and twenty will cost 4*l.* 5*s.* It seems therefore scarcely worth while to print fewer than a hundred.

"Suppose you printed two hundred and fifty at 6*l.* 10*s.*, and, without any name, tried the sale, which may be secretly done. You would then see the opinion of the publick without hazard, if nobody knows but I. If any body else is in the secret, you shall not have my consent to venture. I am, dear madam, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

What follows is a beautiful specimen of his gentleness and complacency to a young lady, his godchild, one of the daughters of his friend Mr. Langton, then, I think, in her seventh year. He took the trouble to write it in a large round hand, nearly resembling printed characters, that she might have the satisfaction of reading it herself. The original lies before me, but shall be faithfully restored to her; and I dare say will be preserved by her as a jewel, as long as she lives.

"TO MISS JANE LANGTON, IN ROCHESTER, KENT.

"May 10, 1784.

"MY DEAREST MISS JENNY,—I am sorry that your pretty letter has been so long without being answered; but, when I am not pretty well, I do not always write plain enough for young ladies. I am glad, my dear, to see that you write so well, and hope that you mind your pen, your book, and your needle, for they are all necessary. Your books will give you knowledge, and make you respected; and your needle will find you useful employment when you do not care to read. When you are a little older, I hope you will be very diligent in learning arithmetick; and, above all, that through your whole life you will carefully say your prayers and read your Bible. I am, my dear, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

On Wednesday, May 5, I arrived in London, and next morning had the pleasure to find Dr. Johnson greatly recovered. I but just saw him; for a coach was waiting to carry him to Islington, to the house of his friend the Reverend Mr. Strahan, where he

went sometimes for the benefit of good air, which, notwithstanding his having formerly laughed at the general opinion upon the subject, he now acknowledged was conducive to health.

One morning afterwards, when I found him alone, he communicated to me, with solemn earnestness, the very remarkable circumstance [alluded to so often in the preceding letters] which had happened in the course of his illness, when he was much distressed by the dropsy. He had shut himself up, and employed a day in particular exercises of religion, fasting, humiliation, and prayer. On a sudden he obtained extraordinary relief, for which he looked up to Heaven with grateful devotion. He made no direct inference from this fact; but from his manner of telling it, I could perceive that it appeared to him as something more than an incident in the common course of events. For my own part, I have no difficulty to avow that cast of thinking, which, by many modern pretenders to wisdom, is called *superstitious*. But here I think even men of dry rationality may believe, that there was an intermediate[1] interposition of Divine Providence, and that "the fervent prayer of this righteous man" availed[2].

On Sunday, May 9, I found Colonel Vallancy[3],

[1] [So in all the editions, though the meaning of the term *intermediate* does not seem quite clear. Perhaps Mr. Boswell may have meant *immediate*.—ED.]

[2] Upon this subject there is a very fair and judicious remark in the Life of Dr. Abernethy, in the first edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, which I should have been glad to see in his Life, which has been written for the second edition of that valuable work. "To deny the exercise of a particular Providence in the Deity's government of the world is certainly impious, yet nothing serves the cause of the scorner more than an incautious forward zeal in determining the particular instances of it." In confirmation of my sentiments, I am also happy to quote that sensible and elegant writer, Mr. Melmoth, in Letter viii of his collection, published under the name of Fitzosborne. "We may safely assert, that the belief of a particular Providence is founded upon such probable reasons as may well justify our assent. It would scarce, therefore, be wise to renounce an opinion which affords so firm a support to the soul in those seasons wherein she stands in most need of assistance, merely because it is not possible, in questions of this kind, to solve every difficulty which attends them."—BOSWELL.

[3] [Afterwards General Vallancy; an ingenious man, but somewhat of a visionary on Irish antiquities. He died in 1812, æt. 92.—ED.

the celebrated antiquary and engineer of Ireland, with him. On Monday, the 10th, I dined with him at Mr. Paradise's, where was a large company; Mr. Bryant, Mr. Joddrel[1], Mr. Hawkins Browne[2], &c. On Thursday, the 13th, I dined with him at Mr. Joddrel's, with another large company; the Bishop of Exeter[3], Lord Monboddo, Mr. Murphy, &c. I was sorry to observe Lord Monboddo avoid any communication with Dr. Johnson. I flattered myself that I had made them very good friends; but unhappily his lordship had resumed and cherished a violent prejudice against my illustrious friend, to whom I must do the justice to say, there was on his part not the least anger, but a good-humoured sportiveness. Nay, though he knew of his lordship's indisposition towards him, he was even kindly; as appeared from his inquiring of me, after him, by an abbreviation of his name, "Well, how does *Monny?*"

On Saturday, May 15, I dined with him at Dr. Brocklesby's, where were Colonel Vallancy, Mr. Murphy, and that ever-cheerful companion, Mr. Devaynes, apothecary to his majesty. [Indeed his friends seem

ED.

[1] [As this sheet was passing through the press, the following paragraph appeared in the daily papers: "Died, on Wednesday, 26th January, 1831, at his house in Portland-place, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, Richard Paul Jodrell, Esq., F.R.S., F.A.S., D.C.L., formerly M.P. for the borough of Seaford, deputy lieutenant, and one of his majesty's justices of the peace for the counties of Oxford, Derby, Norfolk, and Middlesex. It may be recorded as an almost unprecedented instance, that Mr. Jodrell had lived to be in possession of his paternal estates eighty years, his father having died at an early age in 1751. He was educated at Eton and Oxford, and distinguished as a scholar as author of the 'Illustrations of Euripides' and other literary works, and was the last surviving member of Dr. Johnson's [Essex-street] club. Having outlived all his contemporaries, he, melancholy to relate, of late years had outlived his own mental faculties, and it had become necessary, from insidious attempts made on his impaired understanding, to throw legal protection around his person and property. He is succeeded in his estates by his eldest son, Sir Richard Paul Jodrell, of Sall-park, in the county of Norfolk, bart."—ED.]

[2] [Bishop Newton (after giving some amusing anecdotes of Isaac Hawkins Browne, the father,) says, "He left only one son behind him, of the same name with himself, a very worthy good young man, possessed of many of his father's excellencies without his failings."—*Life*, 8vo. 110.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

[3] Dr. John Ross.—BOSWELL.

to have, as it were, celebrated his recovery by a round of dinners, for he wrote on the 13th to Mrs. Thrale,

"Now I am broken loose, my friends seem willing enough to see me. On Monday I dined with Paradise; Tuesday, Hoole; Wednesday, Dr. Taylor; to-day with Joddrel; Friday, Mrs. Garrick; Saturday, Dr. Brocklesby; next Monday, Dilly."] Letters, vol. ii. p. 369.

Of these days, and others on which I saw him, I have no memorials, except the general recollection of his being able and animated in conversation, and appearing to relish society as much as the youngest man. I find only these three small particulars: When a person was mentioned, who said, "I have lived fifty-one years in this world without having had ten minutes of uneasiness;" he exclaimed, "The man who says so lies: he attempts to impose on human credulity." The Bishop of Exeter in vain observed, that men were very different. His lordship's manner was not impressive; and I learnt afterwards, that Johnson did not find out that the person who talked to him was a prelate; if he had, I doubt not that he would have treated him with more respect; for once talking of George Psalmanazar, whom he reverenced for his piety, he said, "I should as soon think of contradicting a bishop." One of the company[1] provoked him greatly by doing what he could least of all bear, which was quoting something of his own writing, against what he then maintained. "What, sir," cried the gentleman, "do you say to

'The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by[2]?'"

Johnson finding himself thus presented as giving an instance of a man who had lived without uneasiness, was much offended, for he looked upon such a quotation as unfair, his anger burst out in an unjustifiable

[1] [Most probably Mr. Boswell himself, who has more than once applied the same quotation from Cibber to Johnson's retorts on him. *Ante*, vol. ii. p. 101. —Ed.]

[2] Verses on the death of Mr. Levett.—Boswell.

retort, insinuating that the gentleman's remark was a sally of ebriety; "Sir, there is one passion I would advise you to command; when you have drunk out that glass, don't drink another." Here was exemplified what Goldsmith said of him, with the aid of a very witty image from one of Cibber's comedies: "There is no arguing with Johnson: for if his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the but end of it."

Another was this: when a gentleman[1] of eminence in the literary world was violently censured for attacking people by anonymous paragraphs in newspapers, he, from the spirit of contradiction, as I thought, took up his defence and said, "Come, come, this is not so terrible a crime; he means only to vex them a little. I do not say that I should do it; but there is a great difference between him and me: what is fit for Hephæstion is not fit for Alexander." Another, when I told him that a young and handsome countess had said to me, "I should think that to be praised by Dr. Johnson would make one a fool all one's life;" and that I answered, "Madam, I shall make him a fool to-day, by repeating this to him;" he said, "I am too old to be made a fool; but if you say I am made a fool, I shall not deny it. I am much pleased with a compliment, especially from a pretty woman."

On the evening of Saturday, May 15, he was in fine spirits at our Essex Head Club. He told us, "I dined yesterday at Mrs. Garrick's with Mrs. Carter[2], Miss Hannah More, and Fanny Burney. Three such women are not to be found: I know not where I could find a fourth, except Mrs. Lennox, who is superiour to them all." BOSWELL. "What!

[1] [Mr. George Steevens. See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 111, and vol. iii. p. 248.—ED.]

[2] This learned and excellent lady, who has been often mentioned in these volumes, died at her house in Clarges-street, Feb. 19, 1806, in her eighty-ninth year.—MALONE.

had you them all to yourself, sir?" JOHNSON. "I had them all, as much as they were had; but it might have been better had there been more company there." BOSWELL. "Might not Mrs. Montague have been a fourth?" JOHNSON. "Sir, Mrs. Montague does not make a trade of her wit; but Mrs. Montague is a very extraordinary woman: she has a constant stream of conversation, and it is always impregnated; it has always meaning." BOSWELL. "Mr. Burke has a constant stream of conversation." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; if a man were to go by chance at the same time with Burke under a shed, to shun a shower, he would say, 'this is an extraordinary man.' If Burke should go into a stable to see his horse dressed, the ostler would say 'we have had an extraordinary man here.'" BOSWELL. "Foote was a man who never failed in conversation. If he had gone into a stable—" JOHNSON. "Sir, if he had gone into the stable, the ostler would have said, here has been a comical fellow; but he would not have respected him." BOSWELL. "And, sir, the ostler would have answered him, would have given him as good as he brought, as the common saying is." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; and Foote would have answered the ostler. When Burke does not descend to be merry, his conversation is very superiour indeed. There is no proportion between the powers which he shows in serious talk and in jocularity. When he lets himself down to that, he is in the kennel." I have in another place[1] opposed, and I hope with success, Dr. Johnson's very singular and erroneous notion as to Mr. Burke's pleasantry. Mr. Windham now said low to me, that he differed from our great friend in this observation; for that Mr. Burke was often very happy in his merriment. It would not have been right for either of us to have contradicted Johnson

[1] "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," vol. ii. p. 269.—BOSWELL.

at this time, in a society all of whom did not know and value Mr. Burke as much as we did. It might have occasioned something more rough, and at any rate would probably have checked the flow of Johnson's good humour. He called to us with a sudden air of exultation, as the thought started into his mind, "O! Gentlemen, I must tell you a very great thing. The Empress of Russia has ordered the 'Rambler' to be translated into the Russian language[1]; so I shall be read on the banks of the Wolga. Horace boasts that his fame would extend as far as the banks of the Rhone; now the Wolga is farther from me than the Rhone was from Horace." BOSWELL. "You must certainly be pleased with this, sir." JOHNSON. "I am pleased, sir, to be sure. A man is pleased to find he has succeeded in that which he has endeavoured to do."

One of the company mentioned his having seen a noble person driving in his carriage, and looking exceedingly well, notwithstanding his great age. JOHNSON. "Ah, sir, that is nothing. Bacon observes that a stout healthy old man is like a tower undermined."

On Sunday, May 16, I found him alone: he talked of Mrs. Thrale with much concern, saying. "Sir, she has done every thing wrong, since Thrale's bridle was off her neck;" and was proceeding to mention some circumstances which have since been the subject of public discussion[2], when he was interrupted by the arrival of Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salisbury.

Dr. Douglas, upon this occasion, refuted a mistaken notion which is very common in Scotland, that

[1] I have since heard that the report was not well founded; but the elation discovered by Johnson in the belief that it was true showed a noble ardour for literary fame.—BOSWELL.

[2] [No doubt in Baretti's libellous strictures upon her. See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 413.—ED.]

the ecclesiastical discipline[1] of the Church of England, though duly enforced, is insufficient to preserve the morals of the clergy, inasmuch as all delinquents may be screened by appealing to the convocation, which being never authorized by the king to sit for the despatch of business, the appeal never can be heard. Dr. Douglas observed, that this was founded upon ignorance; for that the bishops have sufficient power to maintain discipline, and that the sitting of the convocation was wholly immaterial in this respect, it being not a court of judicature, but like a parliament, to make canons and regulations as times may require.

Johnson, talking of the fear of death, said, "Some people are not afraid, because they look upon salvation as the effect of an absolute decree, and think they feel in themselves the marks of sanctification. Others, and those the most rational in my opinion, look upon salvation as conditional; and as they never can be sure that they have complied with the conditions, they are afraid."

In one of his little manuscript diaries about this time I find a short notice, which marks his amiable disposition more certainly than a thousand studied declarations. "Afternoon spent cheerfully and elegantly, I hope without offence to God or man; though in no holy duty, yet in the general exercise and cultivation of benevolence."

On Monday, May 17, I dined with him at Mr. Dilly's, where were Colonel Vallancy, the Reverend Dr. Gibbons, and Mr. Capel Lofft, who, though a most zealous whig, has a mind so full of learning and knowledge, and so much exercised in various

[1] [Experience has proved that in many instances ecclesiastical discipline *cannot* be enforced but at a great pecuniary sacrifice to the individual who attempts it, and without tedious and vexatious delays. To provide a remedy for these and other evils by "inquiring into the practice and proceedings of the Ecclesiastical Courts," a commission issued in 1829.—J. H. Markland.]

departments, and withal so much liberality, that the stupendous powers of the literary Goliath, though they did not frighten this little David of popular spirit, could not but excite his admiration. There was also Mr. Braithwaite of the post-office, that amiable and friendly man, who, with modest and unassuming manners, has associated with many of the wits of the age. Johnson was very quiescent to-day [1]. Perhaps too I was indolent. I find nothing more of him in my notes, but that when I mentioned that I had seen in the king's library sixty-three editions of my favourite Thomas à Kempis,—amongst which it was in eight languages, Latin, German, French, Italian, Spanish, English, Arabick, and Armenian,—he said he thought it unnecessary to collect many editions of a book, which were all the same, except as to the paper and print; he would have the original, and all the translations, and all the editions which had any variations in the text. He approved of the famous collection of editions of Horace by Douglas [2], mentioned by Pope, who is said to have had a closet filled with them; and he added, "every man should try to collect one book in that manner, and present it to a public library."

On Tuesday, May 18, I saw him for a short time in the morning. I told him that the mob had called out, as the king passed [3], "No Fox, no Fox!" which

[1] [He probably was not quite at his ease in the company of Mr. Capel Lofft, if he exhibited, as Mr. Boswell seems to hint, any of his whig zeal.—Ed.]

[2] [The mention by Pope, (no very delicate one,) is in the following lines of the Dunciad and the subjoined *note:*

"Bid me with Pollio sup, as well as dine,
There all the learned shall at the labour stand,
And Douglas lend his soft obstetric hand.

"*Douglas*, a physician of great learning and no less taste; above all, curious "in what related to Horace; of whom he collected every edition, translation, "and comment, to the number of several hundred volumes."—*Dunciad*, b. iv. l. 392. Dr. Douglas was born in Scotland in 1675, and died in London in 1742. He published some medical works.—Ed.]

[3] [To open parliament. The Westminster election had concluded only the day before in favour of Mr. Fox, whose return, however, was delayed by the requisition for a scrutiny.—Ed.]

I did not like. He said, "They were right, sir." I said, I thought not; for it seemed to be making Mr. Fox the king's competitor. There being no audience, so that there could be no triumph in a victory, he fairly agreed with me. I said it might do very well, if explained thus, "Let us have no Fox," understanding it as a prayer to his majesty not to appoint that gentleman minister.

On Wednesday, May 19, I sat a part of the evening with him, by ourselves. I observed, that the death of our friends might be a consolation against the fear of our own dissolution, because we might have more friends in the other world than in this. He perhaps felt this as a reflection upon his apprehension as to death, and said, with heat, "How can a man know *where* his departed friends are, or whether they will be his friends in the other world? How many friendships have you known formed upon principles of virtue? Most friendships are formed by caprice or by chance—mere confederacies in vice or leagues in folly."

We talked of our worthy friend Mr. Langton. He said, "I know not who will go to heaven if Langton does not. Sir, I could almost say *Sit anima mea cum Langtono.*" I mentioned a very eminent friend[1] as a virtuous man. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but ——— has not the evangelical virtue of Langton. ———, I am afraid, would not scruple to pick up a wench."

He however charged Mr. Langton with what he thought want of judgment upon an interesting occasion. "When I was ill," said he, "I desired he

[1] [As Mr. Boswell has seldom applied the term "eminent friend" except either to Mr. Burke or Sir Joshua Reynolds, it may not be unnecessary to remind the reader that at this time Mr. Burke was fifty-four and Sir Joshua sixty-two years of age, and that the good taste, morals, and piety of both, (and more particularly of Mr. Burke, a married man of exemplary conduct—see *ante*, vol. iv. p. 248), forbid our believing that either of them were meant in this passage. It is to be wished that Mr. Boswell had not mentioned so offensive an allusion, or had appropriated it to the proper object.—ED.]

would tell me sincerely in what he thought my life was faulty. Sir, he brought me a sheet of paper, on which he had written down several texts of Scripture recommending christian charity. And when I questioned him what occasion I had given for such an animadversion, all that he could say amounted to this,—that I sometimes contradicted people in conversation. Now what harm does it do to any man to be contradicted?" BOSWELL. "I suppose he meant the *manner* of doing it; roughly and harshly." JOHNSON. "And who is the worse for that?" BOSWELL. "It hurts people of weaker nerves." JOHNSON. "I know no such weak-nerved people." Mr. Burke, to whom I related this conference, said, "It is well if, when a man comes to die, he has nothing heavier upon his conscience than having been a little rough in conversation."

Johnson, at the time when the paper was presented to him, though at first pleased with the attention of his friend, whom he thanked in an earnest manner, soon exclaimed in a loud and angry tone, "What is your drift, sir?" Sir Joshua Reynolds pleasantly observed, that it was a scene for a comedy, to see a penitent get into a violent passion and belabour his confessor. After all, I cannot but be of opinion, that as Mr. Langton was seriously requested by Dr. Johnson to mention what appeared to him erroneous in the character of his friend, he was bound as an honest man to intimate what he really thought, which he certainly did in the most delicate manner; so that Johnson himself, when in a quiet frame of mind, was pleased with it. The texts suggested are now before me, and I shall quote a few of them. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."—*Matt.* v. 5.

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you

that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love."—*Ephes.* v. 1, 2.

"And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."—*Col.* iii. 14.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked."—1 *Cor.* xiii. 4, 5.

I have preserved no more of his conversation at the times when I saw him during the rest of this month, till Sunday, the 30th of May, when I met him in the evening at Mr. Hoole's, where there was a large company both of ladies and gentlemen. Sir James Johnston happened to say that he paid no regard to the arguments of counsel at the bar of the House of Commons, because they were paid for speaking. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, argument is argument. You cannot help paying regard to their arguments if they are good. If it were testimony, you might disregard it, if you knew that it were purchased. There is a beautiful image in Bacon[1] upon this subject: testimony is like an arrow shot from a long bow; the force of it depends on the strength of the hand that draws it. Argument is like an arrow from a crossbow, which has equal force though shot by a child[2]."

[1] Dr. Johnson's memory deceived him. The passage referred to is not Bacon's, but Boyle's, and may be found, with a slight variation, in Johnson's Dictionary, under the word *Crossbow*.—So happily selected are the greater part of the examples in that incomparable work, that if the most striking passages found in it were collected by one of our modern book-makers, under the title of The Beauties of Johnson's Dictionary, they would form a very pleasing and popular volume.—MALONE.

[2] [The anecdote, as Mr. Markland observes, is somewhat differently told by Dr. Moore in his life of Smollett.—"In Boswell's Life of Johnson, mention "is made of an observation of his respecting the manner in which argument ought "to be rated. As Mr. Boswell has not recorded this with his *usual precision*, "and as I was present at Mr. Hoole's at the time mentioned by Mr. Boswell, I "shall here insert what passed, of which I have a perfect recollection. Mention

He had dined that day at Mr. Hoole's, and Miss Helen Maria Williams being expected in the evening, Mr. Hoole put into his hands her beautiful "Ode on the Peace[1]." Johnson read it over, and when this elegant and accomplished young lady[2] was presented to him, he took her by the hand in the most courteous manner, and repeated the finest stanza of her poem. This was the most delicate and pleasing compliment he could pay. Her respectable friend, Dr. Kippis, from whom I had this anecdote, was standing by, and was not a little gratified.

Miss Williams told me, that the only other time she was fortunate enough to be in Dr. Johnson's company, he asked her to sit down by him, which she did; and upon her inquiring how he was, he

"having been made that counsel were to be heard at the bar of the House of "Commons, one of the company at Mr. Hoole's asked Sir James Johnston if "he intended to be present. He answered, that he believed he should not, be- "cause he paid little regard to the arguments of counsel at the bar of the House "of Commons. 'Wherefore do you pay little regard to their arguments, sir?' "said Dr. Johnson. 'Because,' replied Sir James, 'they argue for their fee.' "'What is it to you, sir,' rejoined Dr. Johnson, 'what they argue for? You "have nothing to do with their motive, but you ought to weigh their argument. "Sir, you seem to confound argument with assertion; but there is an essential "distinction between them. Assertion is like an arrow shot from a long bow; "the force with which it strikes depends on the strength of the arm that draws "it. But argument is like an arrow from a crossbow, which has equal force "whether shot by a boy or a giant.' The whole company was struck with the "aptness and beauty of this illustration; and one of them said, 'That is, in- "deed, one of the most just and admirable illustrations that I ever heard in "my life.' 'Sir,' said Dr. Johnson, 'the illustration is none of mine—you will "find it in Bacon.'"

It is satisfactory to find Mr. Boswell thus rather corroborated than corrected by a person who professes superior precision. The substance is the same in both accounts, and it seems to the editor that Mr. Boswell's narration is at least as terse and characteristic as Dr. Moore's.—ED.]

[1] The peace made by that very able statesman the Earl of Shelburne, now Marquis of Lansdown, which may fairly be considered as the foundation of all the prosperity of Great Britain since that time.—BOSWELL.

[2] In the first edition of my work, the epithet *amiable* was given. I was sorry to be obliged to strike it out; but I could not in justice suffer it to remain, after this young lady had not only written in favour of the savage anarchy with which France has been visited, but had (as I have been informed by good authority) walked, without horrour, over the ground at the Thuilleries when it was strewed with the naked bodies of the faithful Swiss Guards, who were barbarously massacred for having bravely defended, against a crew of ruffians, the monarch whom they had taken an oath to defend. From Dr. Johnson she could now expect not endearment, but repulsion.—BOSWELL. [Miss Williams, like many other early enthusiasts of the French revolution, had latterly altered her opinion very considerably. She died in 1828, æt. 65.—ED.]

answered, "I am very ill indeed, madam. I am very ill even when you are near me; what should I be were you at a distance?"

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS REYNOLDS. Reyn. MSS.

"May 28th, 1784.

"MADAM,—You do me wrong by imputing my omission to any captious punctiliousness. I have not yet seen Sir Joshua, and, when I do see him, I know not how to serve you. When I spoke upon your affairs[1] to him at Christmas, I received no encouragement to speak again.

"But we shall never do business by letters. We must see one another.

"I have returned your papers, and am glad that you laid aside the thought of printing them. I am, madam, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

He had now a great desire to go to Oxford, as his first jaunt after his illness. We talked of it for some days, and I had promised to accompany him. He was impatient and fretful to-night, because I did not at once agree to go with him on Thursday. When I considered how ill he had been, and what allowance should be made for the influence of sickness upon his temper, I resolved to indulge him, though with some inconvenience to myself, as I wished to attend the musical meeting in honour of Handel, in Westminster-Abbey, on the following Saturday.

["TO MRS. THRALE. Lett. v. 2. p. 350.

"London, May 31st, 1784.

"I have one way or other been disappointed hitherto of that change of air from which I think some relief may possibly be obtained; but Boswell and I have settled our resolution to go to Oxford on Thursday. But since I was at Oxford, my convivial friend Dr. Edwards and my learned friend Dr. Wheeler are both dead, and my probabilities of pleasure are very much diminished. Why, when so many are taken away, have I been yet spared? I hope that I may be fitter to die.

"How long we shall stay at Oxford, or what we shall do when we leave it, neither Bozzy nor I have settled; he is for his part resolved to remove his family to London, and try his fortune at the English bar: let us all wish him success."]

[1] [Probably *affairs* similar to that mentioned *ante*, vol. iv. p. 240.—ED.]

In the midst of his own diseases and pains, he was ever compassionate to the distresses of others, and actively earnest in procuring them aid, as appears from a note to Sir Joshua Reynolds, of June, in these words:

"I am ashamed to ask for some relief for a poor man, to whom I hope I have given what I can be expected to spare. The man importunes me, and the blow goes round. I am going to try another air on Thursday."

Ed. [The following letter from Miss Reynolds shows that he was not a solicitor for the poor of his own acquaintance only. It seems to have been given to some poor woman as an introduction to Dr. Johnson:]

"Dover-street, July 9th.

Reyn. MSS. ["My good sir,—I could not forbear to communicate to the poor woman the hope you had given me of using your interest with your friends to raise her a little sum to enable her to see her native country again; nor could I refuse to write a line to procure her the pleasure of the confirmation of that hope.

"I am, and *always have been*, very troublesome to you; but you are, and *always have been*, very good to your obliged humble servant, "Frances Reynolds."]

On Thursday, June 3, the Oxford post coach took us up in the morning at Bolt-court. The other two passengers were Mrs. Beresford and her daughter, two very agreeable ladies from America: they were going to Worcestershire, where they then resided. Frank had been sent by his master the day before to take places for us; and I found from the way-bill that Dr. Johnson had made our names be put down. Mrs. Beresford, who had read it, whispered me, "Is this the great Dr. Johnson?" I told her it was; so she was then prepared to listen. As she soon happened to mention, in a voice so low that Johnson did not hear it, that her husband had been a member of the American Congress, I cautioned her to beware of introducing that subject, as she must know how very

violent Johnson was against the people of that country. He talked a great deal; but I am sorry I have preserved little of the conversation. Miss Beresford was so much charmed, that she said to me aside, "How he does talk! Every sentence is an essay." She amused herself in the coach with knotting. He would scarcely allow this species of employment any merit. "Next to mere idleness (said he), I think knotting is to be reckoned in the scale of insignificance; though I once attempted to learn knotting[1]: Dempster's sister (looking to me) endeavoured to teach me it, but I made no progress."

I was surprised at his talking without reserve in the publick post coach of the state of his affairs: "I have (said he) about the world I think above a thousand pounds, which I intend shall afford Frank an annuity of seventy pounds a year." Indeed his openness with people at a first interview was remarkable. He said once to Mr. Langton, "I think I am like Squire Richard[2] in 'The Journey to London,' *I'm never strange in a strange place.*" He was truly *social.* He strongly censured what is much too common in England among persons of condition, —maintaining an absolute silence when unknown to each other; as, for instance, when occasionally brought together in a room before the master or mistress of the house has appeared. "Sir, that is being so uncivilized as not to understand the common rights of humanity."

At the inn where we stopped he was exceedingly dissatisfied with some roast mutton which we had for dinner. The ladies, I saw, wondered to see the

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 97, *n.*; but this repetition of the name renders the Editor doubtful as to the suggestion made in that note, though he cannot discover where or when Dr. Johnson could have been so familiarized with Mr. Dempster's family.—ED.]

[2] [The remark is made by Miss Jenny, and not by her brother. It would have been ill suited to one who was originally described in the dramatis personæ as "a mere whelp."—J. H. MARKLAND.]

great philosopher, whose wisdom and wit they had been admiring all the way, get into ill-humour from such a cause. He scolded the waiter, saying, "It is as bad as bad can be: it is ill-fed, ill-killed, ill-kept, and ill-drest."

He bore the journey very well, and seemed to feel himself elevated as he approached Oxford, that magnificent and venerable seat of learning, orthodoxy, and toryism. Frank came in the heavy coach, in readiness to attend him; and we were received with the most polite hospitality at the house of his old friend Dr. Adams, Master of Pembroke College, who had given us a kind invitation. Before we were set down, I communicated to Johnson my having engaged to return to London directly for the reason I have mentioned, but that I would hasten back to him again. He was pleased that I had made this journey merely to keep him company. He was easy and placid, with Dr. Adams, Mrs. and Miss Adams, and Mrs. Kennicot, widow of the learned Hebræan[1], who was here on a visit. He soon despatched the inquiries that were made about his illness and recovery by a short and distinct narrative, and then assuming a gay air, repeated from Swift,

"Nor think on our approaching ills,
And talk of spectacles and pills."

Dr. Newton, the Bishop of Bristol, having been mentioned, Johnson, recollecting the manner in which he had been censured by that prelate[2], thus

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 386.—ED.]

[2] Dr. Newton in his Account of his own Life, after animadverting upon Mr. Gibbon's History, says, "Dr. Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets' afforded more amusement; but candour was much hurt and offended at the malevolence that predominates in every part. Some passages, it must be allowed, are judicious and well written, but make not sufficient compensation for so much spleen and ill-humour. Never was any biographer more sparing of his praise, or more abundant in his censures. He seemingly delights more in exposing blemishes, than in recommending beauties; slightly passes over excellences, enlarges upon imperfections, and, not content with his own severe reflections, revives old scandal, and produces large quotations from the forgotten works of former criticks. His reputation was so high in the republick of letters, that it wanted not to be raised

retaliated:—"Tom knew he should be dead before what he has said of me would appear. He durst not have printed it while he was alive." DR. ADAMS. "I believe his 'Dissertations on the Prophecies' is his great work." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it is *Tom*'s great work; but how far it is great, or how much of it is Tom's, are other questions. I fancy a considerable part of it was borrowed." DR. ADAMS. "He was a very successful man." JOHNSON. "I don't think so, sir. He did not get very high. He was late in getting what he did get; and he did not get it by the best means. I believe he was a gross flatterer."

I fulfilled my intention by going to London, and returned to Oxford on Wednesday the 9th of June, when I was happy to find myself again in the same agreeable circle at Pembroke College, with the comfortable prospect of making some stay. Johnson welcomed my return with more than ordinary glee.

He talked with great regard of the Honourable Archibald Campbell, whose character he had given at the Duke of Argyll's table when we were at Inverary[1], and at this time wrote out for me, in his own hand, a fuller account of that learned and venerable writer, which I have published in its proper place. Johnson made a remark this evening which struck me a good deal. "I never (said he) knew a nonjuror who could reason[2]." Surely he did

upon the ruins of others. But these essays, instead of raising a higher idea than was before entertained of his understanding, have certainly given the world a worse opinion of his temper. The bishop was therefore the more surprised and concerned for his townsman, for *he respected him not only for his genius and learning, but valued him much for the more amiable part of his character—his humanity and charity, his morality and religion.*" The last sentence we may consider as the general and permanent opinion of Bishop Newton; the remarks which precede it must, by all who have read Johnson's admirable work, be imputed to the disgust and peevishness of old age. I wish they had not appeared, and that Dr. Johnson had not been provoked by them to express himself not in respectful terms of a prelate whose labours were certainly of considerable advantage both to literature and religion.—BOSWELL.

[1] "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," *ante*, vol. iii. p. 52.—BOSWELL.

[2] The Rev. Mr. Agutter has favoured me with a note of a dialogue between

not mean to deny that faculty to many of their writers—to Hickes, Brett, and other eminent divines of that persuasion; and did not recollect that the seven bishops, so justly celebrated for their magnanimous resistance of arbitrary power, were yet nonjurors[1] to the new government. The nonjuring clergy of Scotland, indeed, who, excepting a few, have lately, by a sudden stroke, cut off all ties of allegiance to the house of Stuart, and resolved to pray for our present lawful sovereign by name, may be thought to have confirmed this remark; as it may be said, that the divine indefeasible hereditary right which they professed to believe, if ever true, must be equally true still. Many of my readers will be surprised when I mention that Johnson assured me he had never in his life been in a nonjuring meeting-house.

Next morning at breakfast, he pointed out a passage in Savage's "Wanderer," saying "These are fine verses." "If," said he, "I had written with hostility of Warburton in my Shakspeare, I should have quoted this couplet:

> 'Here Learning, blinded first, and then beguiled,
> Looks dark as Ignorance, as Frenzy wild.'

Mr. John Henderson and Dr. Johnson on this topick, as related by Mr. Henderson, and it is evidently so authentick that I shall here insert it:—HENDERSON. "What do you think, sir, of William Law?" JOHNSON. "William Law, sir, wrote the best piece of parenetick divinity; but William Law was no reasoner." HENDERSON. "Jeremy Collier, sir?" JOHNSON. "Jeremy Collier fought without a rival, and therefore could not claim the victory." Mr. Henderson mentioned Ken and Kettlewell; but some objections were made; at last he said, "But, sir, what do you think of Lesley?" JOHNSON. "Charles Lesley I had forgotten. Lesley *was* a reasoner, and *a reasoner who was not to be reasoned against.*"—BOSWELL. [Charles was the son of Dr. John Lesley, Bishop of Clogher in Ireland. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. Though zealous against popery and King James's popish measures, he could not reconcile his conscience to the oaths to William and Mary, and so became a nonjuror, of which party he was one of the chief literary and theological supports and ornaments. After many years of exile, he returned to his native country, and died in 1722, at his own house at Glaslough, in the county of Monaghan, where his descendants have continued to reside. The present possessor, Mr. Charles Powell Leslie, his great grandson, has represented that county in several parliaments.—ED.]

[1] [Mr. Boswell is mistaken as two of the seven bishops (Lloyd, of St. Asaph's, and Trelawney) were not nonjurors.—ED.]

You see they'd have fitted him to a *T*," (smiling.) DR. ADAMS. "But you did not write against Warburton." JOHNSON. "No, sir, I treated him with great respect both in my preface and in my notes [1]."

Mrs. Kennicot spoke of her brother, the Reverend Mr. Chamberlayne, who had given up great prospects in the Church of England on his conversion to the Roman Catholick faith. Johnson, who warmly admired every man who acted from a conscientious regard to principle, erroneous or not, exclaimed fervently, "God bless him."

Mrs. Kennicot, in confirmation of Dr. Johnson's opinion that the present was not worse than former ages, mentioned that her brother assured her there was now less infidelity on the continent than there had been [2]; Voltaire and Rousseau were less read. I asserted, from good authority, that Hume's infidelity was certainly less read. JOHNSON. "All infidel writers drop into oblivion when personal connexions and the floridness of novelty are gone; though now and then a foolish fellow, who thinks he can be witty upon them, may bring them again into notice. There will sometimes start up a college joker, who does not consider that what is a joke in a college will not do in the world. To such defenders of religion I would apply a stanza of a poem which I remember to have seen in some old collection:

> 'Henceforth be quiet and agree,
> Each kiss his empty brother:
> Religion scorns a foe like thee,
> But dreads a friend like t' other.'

The point is well, though the expression is not correct: *one*, and not *thee*, should be opposed to *t' other* [3]."

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 414.—ED.]

[2] [A few years afforded lamentable evidence how utterly mistaken was this opinion.—ED.]

[3] I have inserted the stanza as Johnson repeated it from memory; but I

On the Roman Catholick religion he said, "If you join the papists externally, they will not interrogate you strictly as to your belief in their tenets. No reasoning papist believes every article of their faith. There is one side on which a good man might be persuaded to embrace it. A good man of a timorous disposition, in great doubt of his acceptance with God, and pretty credulous, may be glad to be of a church where there are so many helps to get to heaven[1]. I would be a papist if I could. I have fear enough; but an obstinate rationality prevents me. I shall never be a papist[2], unless on the near approach of death, of which I have a very great terrour. I wonder that women are not all papists." BOSWELL. "They are not more afraid of death than men are." JOHNSON. "Because they are less wicked." DR. ADAMS. "They are more pious." JOHNSON. "No, hang 'em, they are not more pious. A wicked fellow is the most pious when he takes to it. He'll beat you all at piety."

He argued in defence of some of the peculiar tenets of the church of Rome. As to the giving the bread only to the laity, he said, "They may think, that in

have since found the poem itself, in "The Foundling Hospital for Wit," printed at London, 1749. It is as follows:

EPIGRAM, *occasioned by a religious dispute at Bath.*

"On reason, faith, and mystery high,
Two wits harangue the table;
B————y believes he knows not why,
———— swears 'tis all a fable.
Peace, coxcombs, peace! and both agree!
N————, kiss thy empty brother;
Religion laughs at foes like thee,
And dreads a friend like t'other."—BOSWELL.

[The disputants alluded to in this epigram are supposed to have been *Bentley* (the son of the doctor and the friend of Walpole) and Beau *Nash*.—ED.]

[1] [This facility, however it may, in their last moments, delude the timorous and credulous, is, as Jeremy Taylor observes, proportionably injurious if previously calculated upon. When addressing a convert to the Romish church, he says, "If I had a mind to live an *evil* life, and yet hope for heaven at last, I would be of your religion above any in the world."—*Works*, vol. xi. p. 190.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 214, where the reference to the 3d June, 1784, should have been to *this* day, the 10th.—ED.]

what is merely ritual[1], deviations from the primitive mode may be admitted on the ground of convenience; and I think they are as well warranted to make this alteration, as we are to substitute sprinkling in the room of the ancient baptism[2]. As to the invocation of saints, he said, "Though I do not think it authorised, it appears to me, that 'the communion of saints' in the Creed means the communion with the saints in Heaven, as connected with 'The holy Catholick church[3].'" He admitted the influence of evil spirits upon our minds, and said, "Nobody who believes the New Testament can deny it."

I brought a volume of Dr. Hurd, the Bishop of Worcester's Sermons, and read to the company some passages from one of them, upon this text, "*Resist the Devil, and he will fly from you.*" James iv. 7. I was happy to produce so judicious and elegant a supporter[4] of a doctrine which, I know not why,

[1] [The Bishop of Ferns very justly observes, that the sacrament is not merely *ritual*. Had it been an institution of the church of Rome, they might have modified it; but it was a solemn and specific ordinance of our Saviour himself, which no church could justifiably alter.—ED.]

[2] [The Editor does not recollect any scriptural authority that primitive baptism should *necessarily* be by *immersion*. From the Acts, ii. 41., it may be inferred that 3000 persons were baptized *in Jerusalem* in one day, and the jailor of Philippi and his family were baptized hastily at night, and, as it would seem, within the purlieus of the prison (Acts, xvi. 33). These baptisms could hardly have been by immersion.—ED.]

[3] Waller, in his "Divine Poesie," canto first, has the same thought finely expressed:

> "The church triumphant and the church below
> In songs of praise their present union show:
> Their joys are full, our expectation long;
> In life we differ, but we join in song:
> Angels and we, assisted by this art,
> May sing together, though we dwell apart."—BOSWELL.

[4] The sermon thus opens:—"That there are angels and spirits good and bad; that at the head of these last there is ONE more considerable and malignant than the rest, who in the form or under the name of a *serpent* was deeply concerned in the fall of man, and whose *head*, as the prophetick language is, the Son of Man was one day to *bruise*; that this evil spirit, though that prophecy be in part completed, has not yet received his death's wound, but is still permitted, for ends unsearchable to us, and in ways which we cannot particularly explain, to have a certain degree of power in this world hostile to its virtue and happiness, and sometimes exerted with too much success; all this is so clear from Scripture, that no believer, unless he be first of all *spoiled by philosophy and vain deceit*, can possibly entertain a doubt of it." Having treated of *possessions*, his lordship says, "As I have no authority to affirm that there *are* now any

should, in this world of imperfect knowledge, and therefore of wonder and mystery, in a thousand instances, be contested by some with an unthinking assurance and flippancy.

After dinner, when one of us talked of there being a great enmity between Whig and Tory:—JOHNSON. "Why, not so much, I think, unless when they come into competition with each other. There is none when they are only common acquaintance, none when they are of different sexes. A Tory will marry into a Whig family, and a Whig into a Tory family, without any reluctance. But, indeed, in a matter of much more concern than political tenets, and that is religion, men and women do not concern themselves much about difference of opinion; and ladies set no value on the moral character of men who pay their addresses to them: the greatest profligate will be as well received as the man of the greatest virtue, and this by a very good woman, by a woman who says her prayers three times a day." Our ladies en-

such, so neither may I presume to say with confidence that there are *not* any." "But then, with regard to the influence of evil spirits at this day upon the SOULS of men, I shall take leave to be a great deal more peremptory.—(Then, having stated the various proofs, he adds), All this, I say, is so manifest to every one who reads the Scriptures, that, if we respect their authority, the question concerning the reality of the demoniack influence upon the minds of men is clearly determined." Let it be remembered, that these are not the words of an antiquated or obscure enthusiast, but of a learned and polite prelate now alive; and were spoken, not to a vulgar congregation, but to the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn. His lordship in this sermon explains the words "deliver us from evil," in the Lord's Prayer, as signifying a request to be protected from "the evil one," that is, the Devil. This is well illustrated in a short but excellent Commentary by my late worthy friend the Reverend Dr. Lort, of whom it may truly be said, *Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit.* It is remarkable that Waller, in his "Reflections on the several Petitions in that sacred Form of Devotion," has understood this in the same sense:

"Guard us from all temptations of the FOE."—BOSWELL.

[Another distinguished prelate, when addressing the same learned society a few years ago (1822) on this important subject, thus expressed himself: "The "text (Ephesians, vi. 11, 12) is extremely important in determining a question "which has of late years arisen among christians concerning the existence of "that person, or those persons, to whose influence is ascribed so large a portion "of the sin and misery which in our present state surround us. I say, it is of "late years that this controversy has arisen, because it is certain that during "more than one thousand seven hundred years the christian world (however "otherwise divided) had on this point no difference of opinion."—*Heber's Sermons preached in England.* Sermon IV.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

deavoured to defend their sex from this charge; but he roared them down! "No, no, a lady will take Jonathan Wild as readily as St. Austin, if he has threepence more; and, what is worse, her parents will give her to him. Women have a perpetual envy of our vices: they are less vicious than we, not from choice, but because we restrict them; they are the slaves of order and fashion; their virtue is of more consequence to us than our own, so far as concerns this world."

Miss Adams mentioned a gentleman of licentious character, and said, "Suppose I had a mind to marry that gentleman, would my parents consent?" JOHNSON. "Yes, they'd consent, and you'd go. You'd go, though they did not consent." MISS ADAMS. "Perhaps their opposing might make me go." JOHNSON. "O, very well; you'd take one whom you think a bad man, to have the pleasure of vexing your parents. You put me in mind of Dr. Barrowby[1], the physician, who was very fond of swine's flesh. One day, when he was eating it, he said, 'I wish I was a Jew.'—'Why so?' said somebody; 'the Jews are not allowed to eat your favourite meat.'—'Because,' said he, 'I should then have the gust of eating it, with the pleasure of sinning.'"—Johnson then proceeded in his declamation.

Miss Adams soon afterwards made an observation that I do not recollect, which pleased him much: he said with a good-humoured smile, "That there should be so much excellence united with so much *depravity* is strange."

Indeed this lady's good qualities, merit, and accomplishments, and her constant attention to Dr. Johnson, were not lost upon him. She happened to

[1] [Dr. Barrowby died in 1758, the senior member of the college of physicians. —ED.]

tell him that a little coffee-pot, in which she had made him coffee, was the only thing she could call her own. He turned to her with a complacent gallantry:—"Don't say so, my dear: I hope you don't reckon my heart as nothing[1]."

I asked him if it was true, as reported, that he had said lately, "I am for the king against Fox; but I am for Fox against Pitt." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir: the king is my master; but I do not know Pitt; and Fox is my friend."

"Fox," added he, "is a most extraordinary man: here is a man (describing him in strong terms of objection in some respects according as he apprehended, but which exalted his abilities the more) who has divided the kingdom with Cæsar: so that it was a doubt whether the nation should be ruled by the sceptre of George the Third, or the tongue of Fox."

Dr. Wall, physician at Oxford, drank tea with us. Johnson had in general a peculiar pleasure in the company of physicians, which was certainly not abated by the conversation of this learned, ingenious, and pleasing gentleman. Johnson said, "It is wonderful how little good Radcliffe's travelling fellowships have done. I know nothing that has been imported by them; yet many additions to our medical knowledge might be got in foreign countries. Inoculation, for instance, has saved more lives than war destroys; and the cures performed by the Peruvian bark are innumerable. But it is in vain to send our travelling physicians to France and Italy and Germany, for all that is known there is known here. I'd send them out of Christendom; I'd send them among barbarous nations."

[1] [Miss Adams married, in July, 1788, Benjamin Hyett, Esq. of Painswick, Gloucestershire.—HALL.]

On Friday, June 11, we talked at breakfast of forms of prayer. JOHNSON. "I know of no good prayers but those in the 'Book of Common Prayer.'" DR. ADAMS (in a very earnest manner). "I wish, sir, you would compose some family prayers." JOHNSON. "I will not compose prayers for you, sir, because you can do it for yourself. But I have thought of getting together all the books of prayers which I could, selecting those which should appear to me the best, putting out some, inserting others, adding some prayers of my own, and prefixing a discourse on prayer." We all now gathered about him, and two or three of us at a time joined in pressing him to execute this plan. He seemed to be a little displeased at the manner of our importunity, and in great agitation called out, "Do not talk thus of what is so awful. I know not what time GOD will allow me in this world. There are many things which I wish to do." Some of us persisted, and Dr. Adams said, "I never was more serious about any thing in my life." JOHNSON. "Let me alone, let me alone; I am overpowered." And then he put his hands before his face, and reclined for some time upon the table[1].

I mentioned Jeremy Taylor's using, in his forms of prayer, "I am the chief of sinners," and other such self-condemning expressions[2]. "Now, (said I) this cannot be said with truth by every man, and therefore is improper for a general printed form. I myself cannot say that I am the worst of men: I *will* not say so." JOHNSON. "A man may know, that physically, that is, in the real state of things, he

[1] [Yet he had at this time composed all the prayers (except one) which Dr. Strahan afterwards published, as he stated, by Dr. Johnson's express desire.—ED.]

[2] [Such expressions are by no means common, nor, as Boswell would lead u to suppose, is their spirit a characteristic of Taylor's Prayers.—J. H. MARKLAND.]

is not the worst man; but that morally he may be so [1]. Law observes, 'that every man knows something worse of himself, than he is sure of in others.' You may not have committed such crimes as some men have done; but you do not know against what degree of light they have sinned. Besides, sir, 'the chief of sinners' is a mode of expression for 'I am a great sinner.' So St. Paul, speaking of our SAVIOUR'S having died to save sinners, says, 'of whom I am the chief:' yet he certainly did not think himself so bad as Judas Iscariot." BOSWELL. "But, sir, Taylor means it literally, for he founds a conceit upon it. When praying for the conversion of sinners, and of himself in particular, he says, 'LORD, thou wilt not leave thy *chief* work undone.'" JOHNSON. "I do not approve of figurative expressions in addressing the Supreme Being; and I never use them. Taylor gives a very good advice: 'Never lie in your prayers; never confess more than you really believe; never promise more than you mean to perform.'" I recollected this precept in his 'Golden Grove;' but his *example* for prayer contradicts his *precept.*

Dr. Johnson and I went in Dr. Adams's coach to dine with Dr. Nowell, Principal of St. Mary Hall, at his villa at Iffley, on the banks of the Isis, about two miles from Oxford. While we were upon the road, I had the resolution to ask Johnson whether he thought that the roughness of his manner had been an advantage or not, and if he would not have done more good if he had been more gentle. I proceeded to answer myself thus: "Perhaps it has been of advantage, as it has given weight to what you said; you could not, perhaps, have talked with such au-

[1] [See *ante*, v. i. p. 381.—ED.]

thority without it." JOHNSON. "No, sir; I have done more good as I am. Obscenity and impiety have always been repressed in my company [1]." BOSWELL. "True, sir; and that is more than can be said of every bishop. Greater liberties have been taken in the presence of a bishop, though a very good man, from his being milder, and therefore not commanding such awe. Yet, sir, many people who might have been benefited by your conversation have been frightened away. A worthy friend of ours has told me, that he has often been afraid to talk to you." JOHNSON. "Sir, he need not have been afraid, if he had any thing rational to say [2]. If he had not, it was better he did not talk."

Dr. Nowell is celebrated for having preached a sermon before the House of Commons, on the 30th of January, 1772, full of high Tory sentiments, for which he was thanked as usual, and printed it at their request; but, in the midst of that turbulence and faction which disgraced a part of the present reign, the thanks were afterwards ordered to be expunged [3]. This strange conduct sufficiently exposes itself; and Dr. Nowell will ever have the honour which is due to a lofty friend of our monarchical constitution. Dr. Johnson said to me, "Sir, the court will be very much to blame if he is not promoted." I told this to Dr. Nowell; and asserting my humbler, though not less zealous, exertions in the same cause, I suggested, that whatever return we might receive, we should still have the consolation of being like Butler's steady and generous royalist,

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 405.—ED.]

[2] The words of Erasmus (as my learned friend Archdeacon Kearney observes to me) may be applied to Johnson: "Qui ingenium, sensum, dictionem hominis noverant, multis non offenduntur, quibus graviter erant offendendi, qui hæc ignorarunt."—MALONE.

[3] [See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 143, *note*.—ED.]

"True as the dial to the sun,
Although it be not shone upon[1]."

We were well entertained and very happy at Dr. Nowell's, where was a very agreeable company; and we drank "Church and King" after dinner, with true Tory cordiality.

We talked of a certain clergyman[2] of extraordinary character, who, by exerting his talents in writing on temporary topicks, and displaying uncommon intrepidity, had raised himself to affluence. I maintained that we ought not to be indignant at his success; for merit of every sort was entitled to reward. JOHNSON. "Sir, I will not allow this man to have merit. No, sir; what he has is rather the contrary: I will, indeed, allow him courage, and on this account we so far give him credit. We have more respect for a man who robs boldly on the highway, than for a fellow who jumps out of a ditch, and knocks you down behind your back Courage is a quality so necessary for maintaining virtue, that it is always respected, even when it is associated with vice."

I censured the coarse invectives which were become fashionable in the House of Commons, and said, that if members of parliament must attack each other personally in the heat of debate, it should be done more genteelly. JOHNSON. "No, sir; that would be much worse. Abuse is not so dangerous when there is no

[1] [Hud. p. 3. c. ii. l. 175.—ED.]

[2] [Rev. Henry Bate, who, in 1784, took the name of Dudley, was created a baronet in 1815, and died in 1824, without issue. He became first known to the world for a rather unclerical exhibition of personal prowess in a Vauxhall squabble (see *Lond. Mag.* for 1773, p. 461); he was afterwards actively connected with the public press; and in consequence of something that appeared in the *Morning Herald*, of which he was the proprietor, which was supposed to reflect on Lady Strathmore, he was involved in a duel (or pretended duel, *Gent. Mag.* 1810, p. 183, 1828, p. 496) with Mr. George Robinson Stoney, who soon after married the lady, and took the name of Bowes. It is singular that these remarkable events of his early life are not alluded to in the ample biography of the *Gent. Mag.* (vol. xciv. p. 273. 638). He was afterwards high in the church, and an active and respectable magistrate.—ED.]

vehicle of wit and delicacy, no subtle conveyance. The difference between coarse and refined abuse is as the difference between being bruised by a club, and wounded by a poisoned arrow."—I have since observed his position elegantly expressed by Dr. Young:

> "As the soft plume gives swiftness to the dart[1],
> Good breeding sends the satire to the heart."

On Saturday, June 12, there drank tea with us at Dr. Adams's, Mr. John Henderson, student of Pembroke College, celebrated for his wonderful acquirements in alchymy, judicial astrology, and other abstruse and curious learning[2]; and the Reverend Herbert Croft, who, I am afraid, was somewhat mortified by Dr. Johnson's not being highly pleased with some "Family Discourses" which he had printed; they were in too familiar a style to be approved of by so manly a mind. I have no note of this evening's conversation, except a single fragment. When I mentioned Thomas Lord Lyttelton's vision, the prediction of the time of his death, and its exact fulfilment:—JOHNSON. "It is the most extraordinary thing that has happened in my day. I heard it with my own ears, from his uncle, Lord Westcote[3]. I am so glad to have every evidence of the spiritual world, that I am willing to believe it." DR. ADAMS.

[1] [The feather does not give *swiftness*, but only serves to *guide* the arrow; so that Young's allusion is incorrect as well as Mr. Boswell's.—ED.]

[2] See an account of him, in a sermon by the Reverend Mr. Agutter.—BOSWELL. [He was a young man of very extraordinary abilities, but of strange habits and manners. He had attracted the notice of many of the first characters in Oxford, who paid him much attention. He was supposed to be well read in books which no one else reads. He took his batchelor's degree, but never got out into the world, having died in college in 1778. He was, I think, sent to college by Dean Tucker, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Agutter, Fellow of Magdalen, on the text "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."—HALL.]

[3] A correct account of Lord Lyttelton's supposed Vision may be found in Nashe's "History of Worcestershire."—*Additions and Corrections*, p. 36.—MALONE.

"You have evidence enough; good evidence, which needs not such support." JOHNSON. "I like to have more."

Mr. Henderson, with whom I had sauntered in the venerable walks of Merton College, and found him a very learned and pious man, supped with us. Dr. Johnson surprised him not a little, by acknowledging with a look of horrour, that he was much oppressed by the fear of death. The amiable Dr. Adams suggested that GOD was infinitely good. JOHNSON. "That he is infinitely good, as far as the perfection of his nature will allow, I certainly believe; but it is necessary for good upon the whole, that individuals should be punished. As to an *individual*, therefore, he is not infinitely good; and as I cannot be *sure* that I have fulfilled the conditions on which salvation is granted, I am afraid I may be one of those who shall be damned." (Looking dismally.) DR. ADAMS. "What do you mean by damned?" JOHNSON (passionately and loudly). "Sent to Hell, sir, and punished everlastingly." DR. ADAMS. "I don't believe that doctrine." JOHNSON. "Hold, sir, do you believe that some will be punished at all?" DR. ADAMS. "Being excluded from Heaven will be a punishment; yet there may be no great positive suffering." JOHNSON. "Well, sir; but, if you admit any degree of punishment, there is an end of your argument for infinite goodness simply considered; for infinite goodness would inflict no punishment whatever. There is not infinite goodness physically considered: morally there is." BOSWELL. "But may not a man attain to such a degree of hope as not to be uneasy from the fear of death?" JOHNSON. "A man may have such a degree of hope as to keep him quiet. You see I am not quiet, from

the vehemence with which I talk; but I do not despair." MRS. ADAMS. "You seem, sir, to forget the merits of our Redeemer." JOHNSON. "Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer; but my Redeemer has said that he will set some on his right hand and some on his left."—He was in gloomy agitation, and said, "I 'll have no more on 't."—If what has now been stated should be urged by the enemies of Christianity, as if its influence on the mind were not benignant, let it be remembered, that Johnson's temperament was melancholy, of which such direful apprehensions of futurity are often a common effect. We shall presently see, that when he approached nearer to his awful change, his mind became tranquil, and he exhibited as much fortitude as becomes a thinking man in that situation.

From the subject of death we passed to discourse of life, whether it was upon the whole more happy or miserable. Johnson was decidedly for the balance of misery[1]: in confirmation of which I maintained that no man would choose to lead over again the life which he had experienced. Johnson acceded to that opinion in the strongest terms. This is an inquiry often made; and its being a subject of disquisition is a proof that much misery presses upon human feelings; for those who are conscious of a felicity of existence would never hesitate to accept of a repetition of it. I have met with very few who would. I have heard Mr. Burke make use of a very ingenious and plausible argument on this subject: "Every man," said he, "would lead his life over again; for every man is willing to go on and take an addition to his life, which, as he grows older, he

[1] [Here followed a very long note, or rather dissertation, by the Reverend Mr. Churton, on the subject of Johnson's opinion of the misery of human life, which the editor has thought will be read most conveniently in the Appendix.—ED.]

has no reason to think will be better, or even so good as what has preceded." I imagine, however, the truth is that there is a deceitful hope that the next part of life will be free from the pains, and anxieties, and sorrows, which we have already felt. We are for wise purposes "Condemned to Hope's delusive mine," as Johnson finely says; and I may also quote the celebrated lines of Dryden, equally philosophical and poetical:

> "When I consider life, 'tis all a cheat,
> Yet, fool'd with hope, men favour the deceit;
> Trust on, and think to-morrow will repay;
> To-morrow 's falser than the former day;
> Lies worse; and while it says we shall be blest
> With some new joys, cuts off what we possest.
> Strange cozenage! none would live past years again;
> Yet all hope pleasure in what yet remain;
> And from the dregs of life think to receive
> What the first sprightly running could not give [1]."

It was observed to Dr. Johnson, that it seemed strange that he, who has so often delighted his company by his lively and brilliant conversation, should say he was miserable. JOHNSON. "Alas! it is all outside; I may be cracking my joke, and cursing the sun. *Sun, how I hate thy beams!*" I knew not well what to think of this declaration; whether to hold it as a genuine picture of his mind [2], or as the effect of his persuading himself contrary to fact, that the position which he had assumed as to human unhappiness was true. We may apply to him a sentence in Mr. Greville's "Maxims, Characters, and Reflections [3];" a book which is entitled to much more praise than it has received: "Aristarchus is

[1] *Aurengzebe*, Act iv. Scene 1.—BOSWELL.

[2] Yet there is no doubt that a man may appear very gay in company, who is sad at heart. His merriment is like the sound of drums and trumpets in a battle, to drown the groans of the wounded and dying.—BOSWELL.

[3] Page 139.—BOSWELL.

charming; how full of knowledge, of sense, of sentiment. You get him with difficulty to your supper; and after having delighted every body and himself for a few hours, he is obliged to return home; he is finishing his treatise, to prove that unhappiness is the portion of man."

On Sunday, 13th June, our philosopher was calm at breakfast. There was something exceedingly pleasing in our leading a college life, without restraint and with superiour elegance, in consequence of our living in the master's house, and having the company of ladies. Mrs. Kennicott related, in his presence, a lively saying of Dr. Johnson to Miss Hannah More, who had expressed a wonder that the poet who had written "Paradise Lost," should write such poor sonnets: "Milton, madam, was a genius that could cut a Colossus from a rock, but could not carve heads upon cherry-stones."

We talked of the casuistical question, "Whether it was allowable at any time to depart from *truth?*" JOHNSON. "The general rule is, that truth should never be violated, because it is of the utmost importance to the comfort of life that we should have a full security by mutual faith; and occasional inconveniences should be willingly suffered, that we may preserve it. There must, however, be some exceptions. If, for instance, a murderer should ask you which way a man is gone, you may tell him what is not true, because you are under a previous obligation not to betray a man to a murderer." BOSWELL. "Supposing the person who wrote *Junius* were asked whether he was the authour, might he deny it?" JOHNSON. "I don't know what to say to this. If you were *sure* that he wrote *Junius*, would you, if he denied it, think as well of him

afterwards? Yet it may be urged that what a man has no right to ask, you may refuse to communicate; and there is no other effectual mode of preserving a secret and an important secret, the discovery of which may be very hurtful to you, but a flat denial; for if you are silent, or hesitate, or evade, it will be held equivalent to a confession. But stay, sir, here is another case. Supposing the authour had told me confidentially that he had written *Junius*, and I were asked if he had, I should hold myself at liberty to deny it, as being under a previous promise, express or implied, to conceal it[1]. Now what I ought to do for the authour, may I not do for myself? But I deny the lawfulness of telling a lie to a sick man, for fear of alarming him[2]. You have no business with consequences; you are to tell the truth. Besides, you are not sure what effect your telling him that he is in danger may have. It may bring his distemper to a crisis, and that may cure him. Of all lying, I have the greatest abhorrence of this, because I believe it has been frequently practised on myself."

I cannot help thinking that there is much weight in the opinion of those who have held that truth, as an eternal and immutable principle, ought upon no account whatever to be violated, from supposed previous or superiour obligations, of which every man being to judge for himself, there is great danger that we too often, from partial motives, persuade ourselves that they exist; and probably whatever extraordinary

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 246.—ED.]

[2] [A very eminent physician of the present day (1831) is reported to have publicly stated, that "he always kept in view his duty to preserve a patient's life as long as possible, and that for that reason he did *not* communicate to the patient himself the extent of danger that impended over him."—J. H. MARKLAND. [Warburton says "where the terror of such a sentence may impede the doctor's endeavours to save, the pronouncing it would be very indiscreet."—*Lett. to Hurd*, p. 392.—ED.]

instances may sometimes occur, where some evil may be prevented by violating this noble principle, it would be found that human happiness would, upon the whole, be more perfect were truth universally preserved.

In the notes to the "Dunciad," we find the following verses addressed to Pope[1]:

"While malice, Pope, denies thy page
Its own celestial fire;
While criticks, and while bards in rage,
Admiring, won't admire:
"While wayward pens thy worth assail,
And envious tongues decry;
These times, though many a friend bewail,
These times bewail not I.
"But when the world's loud praise is thine,
And spleen no more shall blame;
When with thy Homer thou shalt shine
In one establish'd fame!
"When none shall rail, and every lay
Devote a wreath to thee;
That day (for come it will) that day
Shall I lament to see."

It is surely not a little remarkable that they should appear without a name. Miss Seward, knowing Dr. Johnson's almost universal and minute literary information, signified a desire that I should ask him who was the authour. He was prompt with his answer:—"Why, sir, they were written by one Lewis, who was either under-master or an usher of Westminster-school, and published a Miscellany, in which 'Grongar Hill' first came out[2]." Johnson praised

[1] The annotator calls them "amiable verses."—BOSWELL. [The annotator was Pope himself.—ED.]

[2] Lewis's verses addressed to Pope (as Mr. Bindley suggests to me) were first published in a collection of Pieces in verse and prose on occasion of "The Dunciad," 8vo. 1732. They are there called an Epigram. "Grongar Hill," the same gentleman observes, was first printed in Savage's Miscellanies, as an *Ode* (it is singular that Johnson should not have recollected this), and was *reprinted* in the same year (1726), in Lewis's Miscellany, in the form it now bears. In that Miscellany (as the Reverend Mr. Blakeway observes to me), "the beautiful poem, 'Away, let nought to love displeasing,' &c. (reprinted in Percy's Reliques, vol. i. b. iii. No. 14), first appeared." It is there said to be a translation from the ancient British. Lewis was authour of "Philip of Mace-

them highly, and repeated them with a noble animation. In the twelfth line, instead of "one establish'd fame," he repeated "one unclouded flame," which he thought was the reading in former editions; but I believe was a flash of his own genius. It is much more poetical than the other.

On Monday, 14th June, and Tuesday, 15th, Dr. Johnson and I dined, on one of them, I forget which, with Mr. Mickle, translator of the "Lusiad," at Wheatley, a very pretty country place a few miles from Oxford; and on the other with Dr. Wetherell, Master of University College. From Dr. Wetherell's he went to visit Mr. Sackville Parker, the bookseller; and when he returned to us gave the following account of his visit, saying, "I have been to see my old friend, Sack. Parker; I find he has married his maid; he has done right. She had lived with him many years in great confidence, and they had mingled minds; I do not think he could have found any wife that would have made him so happy. The woman was very attentive and civil to me; she pressed me

don," a tragedy, published in 1727, and dedicated to Pope: and in 1730 he published a second volume of miscellaneous poems. As Dr. Johnson settled in London not long after the verses addressed to Pope first appeared, he probably then obtained some information concerning their authour. David Lewis, whom he has described as an usher of Westminster-school: yet the Dean of Westminster, who has been pleased, at my request, to make some inquiry on this subject, has not found any vestige of his having ever been employed in this situation. A late writer ("Environs of London," iv. 171,) supposed that the following inscription in the churchyard of the church of Low Leyton, in Essex, was intended to commemorate this poet: "Sacred to the memory of David Lewis, Esq. who died the 8th day of April, 1760, aged 77 years; a great favourite of the Muses, as his many excellent pieces in poetry sufficiently testify.

'Inspired verse may on this marble live,
But can no honour to thy ashes give.'

"... Also Mary, the wife of the above-named David Lewis, fourth daughter of Newdigate Owsley, Esq. who departed this life the 10th of October, 1774, aged 90 years." But it appears to me improbable that this monument was erected for the authour of the Verses to Pope, and of the tragedy already mentioned: the language both of the dedication prefixed to that piece, and of the dedication addressed to the Earl of Shaftsbury, and prefixed to the Miscellanies, 1730, denoting a person who moved in a lower sphere than this Essex squire seems to have done.—MALONE.

to fix a day for dining with them, and to say what I liked, and she would be sure to get it for me. Poor Sack! he is very ill indeed[1]. We parted as never to meet again. It has quite broken me down." This pathetick narrative was strangely diversified with the grave and earnest defence of a man's having married his maid. I could not but feel it as in some degree ludicrous.

In the morning of Tuesday, 15th June, while we sat at Dr. Adams's, we talked of a printed letter from the reverend Herbert Croft, to a young gentleman who had been his pupil, in which he advised him to read to the end of whatever books he should begin to read. JOHNSON. "This is surely a strange advice; you may as well resolve that whatever men you happen to get acquainted with, you are to keep to them for life. A book may be good for nothing; or there may be only one thing in it worth knowing; are we to read it all through? These Voyages, (pointing to the three large volumes of 'Voyages to the South Sea'[2] which were just come out) *who* will read them through? A man had better work his way before the mast than read them through; they will be eaten by rats and mice, before they are read through. There can be little entertainment in such books; one set of savages is like another." BOSWELL. "I do not think the people of Otaheite can be reckoned savages." JOHNSON. "Don't cant in defence of savages." BOSWELL. "They have the art of navigation." JOHNSON. "A dog or cat can swim." BOSWELL. "They carve very ingeniously." JOHNSON. "A cat can scratch, and a child with a nail can scratch." I perceived this was none of the *mollia tempora fandi*; so desisted.

[1] He died at Oxford in his eighty-ninth year, Dec. 10, 1798.—MALONE.
[2] [Cook's voyages.—ED.]

Upon his mentioning that when he came to college he wrote his first exercise twice over, but never did so afterwards: MISS ADAMS. "I suppose, sir, you could not make them better?" JOHNSON. "Yes, madam, to be sure, I could make them better. Thought is better than no thought." MISS ADAMS. "Do you think, sir, you could make your Ramblers better?" JOHNSON. "Certainly I could." BOSWELL. "I 'll lay a bet, sir, you cannot." JOHNSON. "But I will, sir, if I choose. I shall make the best of them you shall pick out, better." BOSWELL. "But you may add to them. I will not allow of that." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, there are three ways of making them better; putting out, adding, or correcting."

During our visit at Oxford, the following conversation passed between him and me on the subject of my trying my fortune at the English bar. Having asked whether a very extensive acquaintance in London, which was very valuable, and of great advantage to a man at large, might not be prejudicial to a lawyer, by preventing him from giving sufficient attention to his business? JOHNSON. "Sir, you will attend to business as business lays hold of you. When not actually employed, you may see your friends as much as you do now. You may dine at a club every day, and sup with one of the members every night; and you may be as much at publick places as one who has seen them all would wish to be. But you must take care to attend constantly in Westminster Hall; both to mind your business, as it is almost all learnt there, (for nobody[1] reads now), and to show that you want to have business. And you must not

[1] [This is very loose talk. Johnson himself, probably from constitutional nervous irritation, was impatient of reading steadily, and his extraordinary quickness at catching up, and his tenacity in retaining what he hastily read, led him to doubt that other men could be more studious.—ED.]

be too often seen at publick places, that competitors may not have it to say, 'He is always at the play-house or at Ranelagh, and never to be found at his chambers.' And, sir, there must be a kind of solemnity in the manner of a professional man. I have nothing particular to say to *you* on the subject. All this I should say to any one; I should have said it to Lord Thurlow twenty years ago."

The profession may probably think this representation of what is required in a barrister who would hope for success, to be much too indulgent; but certain it is, that as

"The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,"

some of the lawyers of this age who have risen high have by no means thought it absolutely necessary to submit to that long and painful course of study which a Plowden, a Coke, and a Hale, considered as requisite. My respected friend, Mr. Langton, has shown me, in the hand-writing of his grandfather, a curious account of a conversation which he had with Lord Chief Justice Hale [1], in which that great man tells him, "That for two years after he came to the inn of court, he studied sixteen hours a day; however, his lordship added, that by this intense application he almost brought himself to his grave, though he were of a very strong constitution, and after reduced himself to eight hours; but that he would not advise any body to so much; that he thought six hours a day, with attention and constancy, was sufficient; that a man must use his body as he would his horse, and his stomach; not tire him at once, but rise with an appetite."

On Wednesday, 16th June, Dr. Johnson and I re-

[1] [This interesting conversation will be found at length in Seward's "Anecdotes of distinguished Persons," iv. 489. It was contributed by Mr. Langton to the Editor of that work.—J. H. Markland.]

turned to London; he was not well to-day, and said very little, employing himself chiefly in reading Euripides. He expressed some displeasure at me for not observing sufficiently the various objects upon the road. "If I had your eyes, sir," said he, "I should count the passengers." It was wonderful how accurate his observation of visual objects was, notwithstanding his imperfect eyesight, owing to a habit of attention. That he was much satisfied with the respect paid to him at Dr. Adams's is thus attested by himself: "I returned last night from Oxford, after a fortnight's abode with Dr. Adams, who treated me as well as I could expect or wish; and he that contents a sick man, a man whom it is impossible to please, has surely done his part well." [He adds, "I went in the common vehicle, with very little fatigue, and came back I think with less."]

Letters, vol. ii. p. 372.

Ed.

After his return to London from this excursion, I saw him frequently, but have few memorandums; I shall therefore here insert some particulars which I collected at various times.

The Reverend Mr. Astle, of Ashbourne, in Derbyshire, brother to the learned and ingenious Thomas Astle, Esq. was from his early years known to Dr. Johnson, who obligingly advised him as to his studies, and recommended to him the following books, of which a list which he has been pleased to communicate lies before me, in Johnson's own handwriting:—"Universal History (ancient)—Rollin's Ancient History—Puffendorf's Introduction to History—Vertot's History of Knights of Malta—Vertot's Revolution of Portugal—Vertot's Revolution of Sweden—Carte's History of England—Present State of England—Geographical Grammar—Prideaux's Connexion—Nelson's Feasts and Fasts—Duty of Man—Gentleman's Religion—Clarendon's History—Watts's Improvement of the Mind—Watts's Logick

—Nature Displayed—Lowth's English Grammar—Blackwall on the Classicks—Sherlock's Sermons—Burnet's Life of Hale—Dupin's History of the Church—Shuckford's Connexions—Law's Serious Call—Walton's Complete Angler—Sandys's Travels—Sprat's History of the Royal Society—England's Gazetteer—Goldsmith's Roman History—Some Commentaries on the Bible."

It having been mentioned to Dr. Johnson that a gentleman who had a son whom he imagined to have an extreme degree of timidity, resolved to send him to a publick school, that he might acquire confidence: "Sir," said Johnson, "this is a preposterous expedient for removing his infirmity; such a disposition should be cultivated in the shade. Placing him at a publick school is forcing an owl upon day."

Speaking of a gentleman whose house was much frequented by low company: "Rags, sir," said he, "will always make their appearance where they have a right to do it."

Of the same gentleman's mode of living, he said, "Sir, the servants, instead of doing what they are bid, stand round the table in idle clusters, gaping upon the guests; and seem as unfit to attend a company, as to steer a man of war."

A dull country magistrate gave Johnson a long, tedious account of his exercising his criminal jurisdiction, the result of which was his having sentenced four convicts to transportation. Johnson, in an agony of impatience to get rid of such a companion, exclaimed, "I heartily wish, sir, that I were a fifth."

Johnson was present when a tragedy was read, in which there occurred this line:

"Who rules o'er freemen should himself be free."

The company having admired it much, "I cannot

agree with you," said Johnson: "it might as well be said,

"Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat[1]."

He was pleased with the kindness of Mr. Cator, who was joined with him in Mr. Thrale's important trust, and thus describes him: "There is much good in his character, and much usefulness in his knowledge." He found a cordial solace at that gentleman's seat at Beckenham, in Kent, which is indeed one of the finest places at which I ever was a guest; and where I find more and more a hospitable welcome.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 284.

Johnson seldom encouraged general censure of any profession; but he was willing to allow a due share of merit to the various departments necessary in civilised life. In a splenetick, sarcastical, or jocular frame of mind, however, he would sometimes utter a pointed saying of that nature. One instance has been mentioned[2], where he gave a sudden satirical stroke to the character of an *attorney*. The too indiscriminate admission to that employment, which requires both abilities and integrity, has given rise to injurious reflections, which are totally inapplicable to many very respectable men who exercise it with reputation and honour.

Johnson having argued for some time with a pertinacious gentleman; his opponent, who had talked in a very puzzling manner, happened to say, "I don't understand you, sir;" upon which Johnson observed, "Sir, I have found you an argument; but I am not obliged to find you an understanding."

Talking to me of Horry Walpole (as Horace, now Earl of Orford, was often called), Johnson allowed that he got together a great many curious little things,

[1] [*Ante*, v. iv. p. 6.—ED.]
[2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 385.—BOSWELL.

and told them in an elegant manner. Mr. Walpole thought Johnson a more amiable character after reading his Letters to Mrs. Thrale: but never was one of the true admirers of that great man[1]. We may suppose a prejudice conceived, if he ever heard Johnson's account to Sir George Staunton, that when he made speeches in parliament for the Gentleman's Magazine, "he always took care to put Sir Robert Walpole in the wrong, and to say every thing he could against the electorate of Hanover." The celebrated Heroick Epistle, in which Johnson is satirically introduced, has been ascribed both to Mr. Walpole and Mr. Mason. One day at Mr. Courtenay's, when a gentleman expressed his opinion that there was more energy in that poem than could be expected from Mr. Walpole; Mr. Warton, the late laureate, observed, "It may have been written by Walpole, and *buckram'd* by Mason[2]."

[1] In his Posthumous Works he has spoken of Johnson in the most contemptuous manner!—MALONE. [Malone doubtless alludes to the edition of Walpole's Works, in 5 vols. 4to., published in 1798; but, with the exception of the *Letters*, almost the whole of Walpole's writings had been previously given to the world. The following passage occurs in one of the letters to General Conway, "Have you got Boswell's most absurd, enormous book? The "best thing in it is a bon mot of Lord Pembroke. The more one learns of "Johnson, the more preposterous assemblage he appears of strong sense, of the "lowest bigotry and prejudices, of pride, brutality, fretfulness and vanity—and "Boswell is the ape of most of his faults, without a grain of his sense. It is the "story of a mountebank and his zany."—5th *Oct.* 1785. In a letter to Mr. Cole, published since Mr. Malone's death, Walpole says, "I have no "thirst to know the rest of my cotemporaries, from the absurd bombast of Dr. "Johnson down to the silly Dr. Goldsmith. Though the latter changeling has "had bright gleams of parts, and the former had sense till he changed it for "words and sold it for a pension."—27 *April*, 1773. The expression is smart and epigrammatic, but has, as relates to Johnson, little meaning. Johnson's *sense* and *verbosity* were cotemporaneous. Indeed his later works have fewer hard words than his first publications; so that at least he did not "*change* sense for words." As to the pension, it has been shown that Johnson did not sell his principles for it: but, at all events, he did not "*sell* his sense" in the meaning of *parting* with it. And the Quarterly Review on *Walpole's Memoirs* (March, 1822), proves that though he talked and wrote in strains of high disinterestedness, he was the last man who ought to have charged another with any *venal change* either of principles or language. As to Goldsmith, Walpole had before happily characterised him as an "*inspired idiot*."—ED.]

[2] It is now (1804) *known*, that the "Heroick Epistle" was written by Mason. —MALONE. [The editor is satisfied, from a variety of evidence, that Walpole was concerned in this lively satire, and that the distribution of the shares given in a former note (*ante*, vol. iv. p. 485) is substantially correct.—ED].

He disapproved of Lord Hailes, for having modernised the language of the ever memorable John Hales of Eton, in an edition which his lordship published of that writer's works. "An authour's language, sir," said he, "is a characteristical part of his composition, and is also characteristical of the age in which he writes. Besides, sir, when the language is changed, we are not sure that the sense is the same. No, sir: I am sorry Lord Hailes has done this."

Here it may be observed, that his frequent use of the expression, *No, sir*, was not always to intimate contradiction: for he would say so when he was about to enforce an affirmative proposition which had not been denied, as in the instance last mentioned. I used to consider it as a kind of flag of defiance; as if he had said, "Any argument you may offer against this is not just. No, sir, it is not." It was like Falstaff's "I deny your major[1]."

Sir Joshua Reynolds having said that he took the altitude of a man's taste by his stories and his wit, and of his understanding by the remarks which he repeated; being always sure that he must be a weak man, who quotes common things with an emphasis as if they were oracles;—Johnson agreed with him; and Sir Joshua having also observed that the real character of a man was found out by his amusements, Johnson added, "Yes, sir; no man is a hypocrite in his pleasures."

I have mentioned Johnson's general aversion to a pun. He once, however, endured one of mine. When we were talking of a numerous company in which he had distinguished himself highly, I said, "Sir, you were a COD surrounded by smelts. Is not this enough

[1] [Sir James Mackintosh remembers that while spending the Christmas of 1797 at Beaconsfield, Mr. Burke said to him, "Johnson showed more powers "of mind in company than in his writings; but he argued only for victory; "and when he had neither a paradox to defend, nor an antagonist to crush, he "would preface his *assent* with, *Why, no, sir.*"—ED.]

for you? at a time too when you were not *fishing* for a compliment?" He laughed at this with a complacent approbation. Old Mr. Sheridan observed, upon my mentioning it to him, "He liked your compliment so well, he was willing to take it with *pun sauce*." [Though no great friend to puns, he once, by accident, made a singular one. A person who affected to live after the Greek manner, and to anoint himself with oil, was one day mentioned: Johnson, in the course of conversation on the singularity of his practice, gave him the denomination of this man of *Greece* (or *grease*, as you please to take it)]. For my own part, I think no innocent species of wit or pleasantry should be suppressed; and that a good pun may be admitted among the smaller excellencies of lively conversation. Hawk. Apoph. p. 210.

Had Johnson treated at large *De Claris Oratoribus*, he might have given us an admirable work. When the Duke of Bedford attacked the ministry as vehemently as he could, for having taken upon them to extend the time for the importation of corn, Lord Chatham, in his first speech in the House of Lords, boldly avowed himself to be an adviser of that measure. "My colleagues," said he, "as I was confined by indisposition, did me the signal honour of coming to the bedside of a sick man, to ask his opinion. But, had they not thus condescended, I should have *taken up my bed and walked*, in order to have delivered that opinion at the Council-board." Mr. Langton, who was present, mentioned this to Johnson, who observed, "Now, sir, we see that he took these words as he found them, without considering, that though the expression in Scripture, *take up thy bed and walk*, strictly suited the instance of the sick man restored to health and strength, who would of course be supposed to carry his bed with him, it could not be proper in the case of a man who was lying in a

state of feebleness, and who certainly would not add to the difficulty of moving at all, that of carrying his bed[1].",

When I pointed out to him in the newspaper one of Mr. Grattan's animated and glowing speeches in favour of the freedom of Ireland, in which this expression occurred (I know not if accurately taken): "We will persevere, till there is not one link of the English chain left to clank upon the rags of the meanest beggar in Ireland:"—"Nay, sir," said Johnson, "don't you perceive that *one* link cannot clank?"

Mrs. Thrale has published[2], as Johnson's, a kind of parody or counterpart of a fine poetical passage in one of Mr. Burke's speeches on American taxation. It is vigorously but somewhat coarsely executed; and I am inclined to suppose, is not quite correctly exhibited. I hope he did not use the words "*vile agents*" for the Americans in the House of Parliament; and if he did so, in an extempore effusion, I wish the lady had not committed it to writing.

Mr. Burke uniformly showed Johnson the greatest respect; and when Mr. Townshend, now Lord Sydney, at a period when he was conspicuous in opposition, threw out some reflection in parliament upon the grant of a pension to a man of such political principles as Johnson; Mr. Burke, though then of the same party with Mr. Townshend, stood warmly forth in defence of his friend, to whom, he justly observed, the pension was granted solely on account of his eminent literary merit. I am well assured, that Mr. Townshend's attack upon Johnson was the occasion of his "hitching in a rhyme[3];" for that in the original

[1] [Lord Chatham meant, in his strong metaphorical way, to say, that his desire to do that public duty would have operated a *miracle* on him; so that Johnson's remark seems hypercritical.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 128.—ED.]

[3] [I rather believe that it was in consequence of his persisting in clearing the

copy of Goldsmith's character of Mr. Burke, in his "Retaliation," another person's name stood in the couplet where Mr. Townshend is now introduced:

> "Though fraught with all learning kept straining his throat,
> To persuade *Tommy Townshend* to lend him a vote."

It may be worth remarking among the *minutiæ* of my collection, that Johnson was once drawn to serve in the militia, the trained bands of the city of London, and that Mr. Rackstrow, of the Museum in Fleet-street, was his colonel. It may be believed he did not serve in person; but the idea, with all its circumstances, is certainly laughable. He upon that occasion provided himself with a musket, and with a sword and belt, which I have seen hanging in his closet.

He was very constant to those whom he once employed, if they gave him no reason to be displeased. When somebody talked of being imposed on in the purchase of tea and sugar, and such articles: "That will not be the case," said he, "if you go to a *stately shop*, as I always do. In such a shop it is not worth their while to take a petty advantage."

An authour of most anxious and restless vanity[1] being mentioned, "Sir," said he, "there is not a young sapling upon Parnassus more severely blown about by every wind of criticism than that poor fellow."

The difference, he observed, between a well-bred and an ill-bred man is this: "One immediately attracts your liking, the other your aversion. You love the one till you find reason to hate him; you hate the other till you find reason to love him."

gallery of the House of Commons, in spite of the earnest remonstrances of Burke and Fox, one evening when Garrick was present.—MACKINTOSH]

[1] [Probably Mr. Perceval Stockdale. See *ante*, vol. ii, p. 116.—ED.]

The wife of one of his acquaintance[1] had fraudulently made a purse for herself out of her husband's fortune. Feeling a proper compunction in her last moments, she confessed how much she had secreted; but before she could tell where it was placed, she was seized with a convulsive fit and expired. Her husband said, he was more hurt by her want of confidence in him, than by the loss of his money. "I told him," said Johnson, "that he should console himself; for *perhaps* the money might be *found*, and he was *sure* that his wife was *gone*."

A foppish physician once reminded Johnson of his having been in company with him on a former occasion: "I do not remember it, sir." The physician still insisted; adding that he that day wore so fine a coat that it must have attracted his notice. "Sir," said Johnson, "had you been dipped in Pactolus, I should not have noticed you."

He seemed to take a pleasure in speaking in his own style; for when he had carelessly missed it, he would repeat the thought translated into it. Talking of the comedy of "The Rehearsal," he said, "It has not wit enough to keep it sweet." This was easy;—he therefore caught himself, and pronounced a more round sentence: "It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction[2]."

He censured a writer of entertaining[3] Travels for assuming a feigned character, saying (in his sense of the word), "He carries out one lie; we know not how many he brings back." At another time, talking

[1] [Lady Knight tells this anecdote in her papers on Miss Williams (*Europ. Mag.* 1799), but she does not call the lady the wife of *one of his acquaintance.* —Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, v. ii. p. 116.—Ed.]

[3] [Perhaps Dr. Thomas Campbell's work on Ireland, see *ante*, vol. iii. p. 213; but the editor suspects it was some more recent publication.—Ed.]

of the same person, he observed, "Sir, your assent to a man whom you have never known to falsify is a debt: but after you have known a man to falsify, your assent to him then is a favour."

Though he had no taste for painting, he admired much the manner in which Sir Joshua Reynolds treated of his art, in his "Discourses to the Royal Academy." He observed one day of a passage in them, "I think I might as well have said this myself;" and once when Mr. Langton was sitting by him, he read one of them very eagerly, and expressed himself thus: "Very well, Master Reynolds; very well, indeed. But it will not be understood."

When I observed to him that Painting was so far inferiour to Poetry, that the story or even emblem which it communicates must be previously known, and mentioned as a natural and laughable instance of this, that a little miss on seeing a picture of Justice with the scales, had exclaimed to me, "See, there's a woman selling sweetmeats;" he said, "Painting, sir, can illustrate, but cannot inform."

[For painting he certainly had no taste, no acquired taste, for his sight was worse even than his hearing.] [He even to Mrs. Piozzi professed such scorn of it, as to say that he should sit very quietly in a room hung round with pictures of the greatest masters, and never feel the slightest disposition to turn them, if their backs were outermost, unless it might be for the sake of telling Sir Joshua that he had turned them. In one instance, however, he admitted that painting required a considerable exercise of mind; yet even on that occasion he betrayed what Mrs. Thrale calls his "scorn of the art." Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned some picture as excellent. "It has often grieved me, sir," said Dr. p. 75.

Reyn. Recoll.

Piozzi Anec. p. 76.

Johnson, "to see so much mind as the science of painting requires, laid out upon such perishable materials: why do not you oftener make use of copper? I could wish your superiority in the art you profess to be preserved in stuff more durable than canvas." Sir Joshua urged the difficulty of procuring a plate large enough for historical subjects, and was going to raise farther observations: "What foppish obstacles are these!" exclaimed on a sudden Dr. Johnson: "here is Thrale has a thousand ton of copper; you may paint it all round if you will, I suppose; it will serve him to brew in afterward: will it not, sir?"] [In one of his opinions, however, on this art, the editor confesses that he entirely concurs.]

Ed.

Hawk. Apoph. p. 208. [Talking with some persons about allegorical painting, he said, "I had rather see the portrait of a dog that I know, than all the allegorical paintings they can show me in the world."]

No man was more ready to make an apology when he had censured unjustly than Johnson. When a proof-sheet of one of his works was brought to him, he found fault with the mode in which a part of it was arranged, refused to read it, and in a passion, desired that the compositor[1] might be sent to him. The compositor was Mr. Manning, a decent sensible man, who had *composed* about one half of his "Dictionary," when in Mr. Strahan's printing-house; and a great part of his "Lives of the Poets," when in that of Mr. Nichols; and who (in his seventy-seventh year) when in Mr. Baldwin's printing-house, composed a part of the first edition of this work concerning him. By producing the manuscript, he at

[1] Compositor in the printing-house means, the person who adjusts the types in the order in which they are to stand for printing; and arranges what is called the *form*, from which an impression is taken.—Boswell.

once satisfied Dr. Johnson that he was not to blame. Upon which Johnson candidly and earnestly said to him, "Mr. Compositor, I ask your pardon; Mr. Compositor, I ask your pardon, again and again."

His generous humanity to the miserable was almost beyond example. The following instance is well attested: coming home late one night, he found a poor woman lying in the street, so much exhausted that she could not walk; he took her upon his back and carried her to his house, where he discovered that she was one of those wretched females who had fallen into the lowest state of vice, poverty, and disease. Instead of harshly upbraiding her, he had her taken care of with all tenderness for a long time, at a considerable expense, till she was restored to health, and endeavoured to put her into a virtuous way of living[1].

[Miss Reynolds says, that throughout her life she remembered the impression she felt in his favour the first time she was in company with Dr. Johnson, on his saying, that as he returned to his lodgings, at one or two o'clock in the morning, he often saw poor children asleep on thresholds and stalls, and that he used to put pennies into their hands to buy them a breakfast[2].] Reyn. Recol.

He thought Mr. Caleb Whitefoord singularly happy in hitting on the signature of *Papyrius Cursor* to his ingenious and diverting Cross Readings of the newspapers[3]; it being a real name of an ancient Roman, and clearly expressive of the thing done in this lively conceit.

[1] The circumstance therefore alluded to in Mr. Courtenay's "Poetical Character" of him is strictly true. My informer was Mrs. Desmoulins, who lived many years in Dr. Johnson's house.—BOSWELL.

[2] [And this was at a time when he himself was living on *pennies*.—ED.]

[3] [He followed his *Cross Readings* by a still more witty paper on the *Errors of the Press*. These two laughable essays are preserved in the Foundling Hospital for Wit, and some similar publications.—ED.]

He once in his life was known to have uttered what is called a *bull:* Sir Joshua Reynolds, when they were riding together in Devonshire, complained that he had a very bad horse, for that even when going down hill he moved slowly step by step. "Ay," said Johnson, "and when he *goes* up hill he *stands still.*"

He had a great aversion to gesticulating in company. He called once to a gentleman[1] who offended him in that point, "Don't *attitudenise.*" And when another gentleman thought he was giving additional force to what he uttered by expressive movements of his hands, Johnson fairly seized them, and held them down.

An authour of considerable eminence[2] having engrossed a good share of the conversation in the company of Johnson, and having said nothing but what was trifling and insignificant, Johnson, when he was gone, observed to us, "It is wonderful what a difference there sometimes is between a man's powers of writing and of talking. ——— writes with great spirit, but is a poor talker: had he held his tongue we might have supposed him to have been restrained by modesty; but he has spoken a great deal to-day, and you have heard what stuff it was."

A gentleman having said that a *conge d'elire* has not, perhaps, the force of a command, but may be considered only as a strong recommendation:—"Sir," replied Johnson, who overheard him, "it is such a recommendation, as if I should throw you out of a

[1] [This is supposed to have been Sir Richard Musgrave (*ante*, p. 99), who had, it must be confessed, a great eagerness of manner. One day when Sir Richard was urging him with singular warmth to write the lives of the prose writers, and getting up to enforce his suit, Johnson coldly replied, "Sit down, sir." *Piozzi*, p. 226.—ED.]

[2] [Perhaps Doctor Robertson. See *ante*, v. iv. p. 205.—ED.]

two pair of stairs window, and recommend to you to fall soft[1]."

Mr. Steevens, who passed many a social hour with him during their long acquaintance, which commenced when they both lived in the Temple, has preserved a good number of particulars concerning him, most of which are to be found in the department of Apophthegms[2], &c. in the collection of "Johnson's Works." But he has been pleased to favour me with the following, which are original:

"One evening, previous to the trial of Baretti, a consultation of his friends was held at the house of Mr. Cox, the solicitor, in Southampton-buildings, Chancery-lane. Among others present were Mr. Burke and Dr. Johnson, who differed in sentiments concerning the tendency of some part of the defence the prisoner was to make. When the meeting was over, Mr. Steevens observed that the question between him and his friend had been agitated with rather too much warmth. 'It may be so, sir,' replied the doctor, 'for Burke and I should have been of one opinion if we had had no audience[3].' Steevens

"Dr. Johnson once assumed a character in which perhaps even Mr. Boswell never saw him. His curiosity having been excited by the praises bestowed

[1] This has been printed in other publications "fall *to the ground*." But Johnson himself gave me the true expression which he had used as above; meaning that the recommendation left as little choice in that one case as the other.—BOSWELL.

[2] [This is Sir J. Hawkins's collection of *Johnsoniana*, referred to *ante*, v. iii. p. 403. Such of these anecdotes as were also given by Mr. Boswell and Mrs. Piozzi have been quoted from *them*. Some others have been selected by the editor and placed near corresponding passages of Mr. Boswell's text. The remainder, for which no particular place occurred or which were accidentally overlooked, will be here given in continuation of those supplied by Mr. Steevens, by whom Mr. Boswell (ever anxious to depreciate the merit of Sir J. Hawkins) intimates that "most of them" were originally furnished.—ED.]

[3] [What an extraordinary assertion, that in a matter in which the life and death—nay, the ignominious death—of a friend was at stake, he still talked for victory! The editor has seen so much reason to distrust anecdotes told from memory, that he hesitates to give implicit credit to this story. Dr. Johnson, no doubt, too often talked for victory, but not, it is to be hoped, on so serious an occasion.—ED.]

Steevens on the celebrated Torré's fireworks at Marybone-gardens, he desired Mr. Steevens to accompany him thither. The evening had proved showery, and soon after the few people present were assembled, publick notice was given that the conductors of the wheels, suns, stars, &c. were so thoroughly watersoaked that it was impossible any part of the exhibition should be made. 'This is a mere excuse,' says the doctor, 'to save their crackers for a more profitable company. Let us both hold up our sticks and threaten to break those coloured lamps that surround the orchestra, and we shall soon have our wishes gratified. The core of the fireworks cannot be injured; let the different pieces be touched in their respective centres, and they will do their offices as well as ever.' Some young men who overheard him immediately began the violence he had recommended, and an attempt was speedily made to fire some of the wheels which appeared to have received the smallest damage; but to little purpose were they lighted, for most of them completely failed. The authour of 'The Rambler,' however, may be considered on this occasion as the ringleader of a successful riot, though not as a skilful pyrotechnist.

"It has been supposed that Dr. Johnson, so far as fashion was concerned, was careless of his appearance in publick. But this is not altogether true, as the following slight instance may show:—Goldsmith's last comedy was to be represented during some court-mourning[1], and Mr. Steevens appointed to call on Dr. Johnson, and carry him to the tavern where he was to dine with other of the poet's friends. The doctor was ready dressed, but in coloured clothes; yet being told that he would find every one else in black, re-

[1] ["*She Stoops to Conquer*," first acted in March, 1773, during a court mourning for the king of Sardinia.—Ed.]

ceived the intelligence with a profusion of thanks, hastened to change his attire, all the while repeating his gratitude for the information that had saved him from an appearance so improper in the front row of a front box. 'I would not,' added he, 'for ten pounds have seemed so retrograde to any general observance.' Steevens

"'He would sometimes found his dislikes on very slender circumstances. Happening one day to mention Mr. Flexman, a dissenting minister, with some compliment to his exact memory in chronological matters; the doctor replied, 'Let me hear no more of him, sir. That is the fellow who made the index to my Ramblers, and set down the name of Milton thus:—Milton, *Mr.* John.'"

Mr. Steevens adds this testimony: "It is unfortunate, however, for Johnson, that his particularities and frailties can be more distinctly traced than his good and amiable exertions. Could the many bounties he studiously concealed, the many acts of humanity he performed in private, be displayed with equal circumstantiality, his defects would be so far lost in the blaze of his virtues, that the latter only would be regarded."

[Dr. Johnson said he always mistrusted romantick virtue, as thinking it founded on no fixed principle. Hawk. Apoph. p. 197.

He used to say that where secrecy or mystery began, vice or roguery was not far off.

Being once asked if he ever embellished a story—"No," said he; "a story is to lead either to the knowledge of a fact or character, and is good for nothing if it be not strictly and literally true[1]."

"Round numbers," said he, "are always false."

"Watts's Improvement of the Mind" was a very favourite book with him; he used to recommend it, Ibid. p. 198.

[1] [See *ante*, v. iii. p. 320.—Ed.]

Hawk. Apoph. p. 197. as he also did "Le Dictionnaire portatif" of the Abbé L'Avocat.

He has been accused of treating Lord Lyttelton roughly in his life of him; he assured a friend, however, that he kept back a very ridiculous anecdote of him, relative to a question he put to a great divine of his time.]

Ed. [The following letters (which reached the editor too late for their chronological place) will show how violently, and on what slight grounds, the friends of Lord Lyttleton resented Johnson's treatment of him. Now, that personal feelings have subsided, the readers of the *Life* will wonder at Mr. Pepys's extravagant indignation; and we have already seen that Johnson cared so little about the matter that he was willing that the Life should have been written for him by one of Lord Lyttelton's friends[1].

Mont. MSS. "MR. PEPYS TO MRS. MONTAGUE.

"Kensington Gravel Pits, 4th August, 1781, but direct to Wimpole-street.

"DEAR MADAM,

* * * * * *

"I have within these few days received the following paragraph in a letter from a friend of mine in Ireland:—'Johnson's Characters of some Poets breathe such inconsistency, such absurdity, and such want of taste and feeling, that it is the opinion of the *Count of Narbonne*[2], Sir N. Barry, and myself, that Mrs. Montague should expose him in a short publication. He deserves it almost as much as Voltaire—if not, *Lytteltoni gratiâ*, do it yourself.'

"I met him some time ago at Streatham[3], and such a day did we pass in disputation upon the life of our dear friend Lord Lyttelton as I trust it will never be my fate to pass again!

[1] [*Ante*, vol. iv. p. 320 and 427, *n.*—Ed.]

[2] [Robert Jephson, Esq., author of *Braganza* and the *Count de Narbonne*—see *ante*, v. ii. p. 89., where there seems reason to believe that Johnson and Mr. Jephson were no great friends. He died in 1803.—Ed.]

[3] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 454.—Ed.]

The moment the cloth was removed he challenged me to *come out* (as he called it), and say what I had to object to his Life of Lord Lyttelton. This (you see) was a call which, however disagreeable to myself and the rest of the company, I could not but obey, and so *to it we went* for three or four hours without ceasing. He once observed that it was the *duty* of a biographer to state all the *failings* of a respectable character. I never longed to do any thing so much as to assume his own principle, and to go into a *detail* which I could suppose *his* biographer might in some future time think necessary; but I contented myself with *generals*. He took great credit for not having mentioned the *coarseness of Lord Lyttelton's manners*. I told him that if he would insert *that*[1] in the next edition, I would excuse him all the rest. We shook hands, however, at parting, which put me much in mind of the parting between Jaques and Orlando—'God be with you; let us meet as *seldom* as we can! Fare you well; I hope we shall be better strangers!' We have not met again till last Tuesday, and then I must do him the justice to say that he did all in his power to show me that he was sorry for the former attack." Mont. MSS.

"MR. PEPYS TO MRS. MONTAGU.

"Tunbridge Wells, 5th Oct. 1781.

"When I read your application of the words 'Be angry and sin not,' I could not help exclaiming, 'How admirable is it to see the person who perhaps is most angry, and who has certainly the most reason to be so, the foremost to restrain, not only her own emotions, but those of others, within the bounds of justice and humanity!' Mont. MSS.

"But, my dear madam, what hurts me all this while is, not that Johnson should go unpunished, but that our dear and respectable friend should go down to posterity with that artful and studied contempt thrown upon his character which he so little deserved, and that a man who (notwithstanding the little foibles he might have) was in my opinion one of the most exalted patterns of virtue, liberality, and benevolence, not to mention the high rank which he held in literature, should be handed down to succeeding generations under the appellation of *poor Lyttelton!* This, I must own, vexes and disquiets me whenever I think of it; and had I the command of half your

[1] [On the principle—

"Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes"—

Pepys thought, justly enough, that a charge of *coarseness of manner* made by Johnson against Lord Lyttelton would be so ridiculous as to defeat all the rest of his censure.—ED.]

powers, tempered as they are with that true moderation and justice, he should not sleep within his silent grave, I do not say unrevenged (because that is not what I wish) but unvindicated, and unrescued from that contempt which has been so industriously and so injuriously thrown upon him. But enough of this subject, which must be disagreeable to us both."

Hawk. Apoph. p. 198. Johnson's account of Lord Lyttelton's envy to Shenstone for his improvements in his grounds, &c. was confirmed by an ingenious writer. Spence was in the house for a fortnight with the Lytteltons before they offered to show him Shenstone's place.

To some lady who was praising Shenstone's poems very much, and who had an Italian greyhound lying by the fire, he said, "Shenstone holds amongst poets the same rank your dog holds amongst dogs: he has not the sagacity of the hound, the docility of the spaniel, nor the courage of the bull-dog, yet he is still a pretty fellow."

Johnson spoke Latin with great fluency and elegance. He said, indeed, he had taken great pains about it.

Dr. Johnson and Dr. Sumner of Harrow were dining one day, with many other persons, at Mrs. Macaulay's [1]. She had talked a long time at dinner about the natural equality of mankind. Johnson, when she had finished her harangue, rose up from the table, and with great solemnity of countenance, and a bow to the ground, said to the servant, who was waiting behind his chair, "Mr. John, pray be seated in my place, and permit me to wait upon you in my turn: your mistress says, you hear, that we are all equal."

Being asked whether he had read Mrs. Macaulay's second volume of the "History of England"—"No, sir," says he, "nor her first neither."

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 440.—Ed.]

When some one was lamenting Foote's unlucky fate in being kicked in Dublin, Johnson said he was glad of it. "He is rising in the world (said he): when he was in England, no one thought it worth while to kick him." Hawk. Apoph. p. 199.

He was much pleased with the following repartee: *Fiat experimentum in corpore vili*, said a French physician to his colleague, in speaking of the disorder of a poor man that understood Latin, and who was brought into an hospital; *Corpus non tam vile est*, says the patient, *pro quo Christus ipse non dedignatus est mori.*

Johnson used to say a man was a scoundrel that was afraid of any thing.

To his censure of fear [1] in general, he made, however, one exception—with respect to the fear of death, *timorum maximus:* he thought that the best of us were but unprofitable servants, and had much reason to fear.

When some one asked him whether they should introduce Hugh Kelly, the authour, to him—"No, sir," says he, "I never desire to converse with a man who has written more than he has read:" yet when his play was acted for the benefit of his widow, Johnson furnished a prologue.

He repeated poetry with wonderful energy and feeling. He was seen to weep whilst he repeated Goldsmith's character of the English in his "Traveller," beginning "*Stern o'er each bosom*[2]," &c.

He held all authours very cheap that were not satisfied with the opinion of the publick about them. He used to say that every man who writes thinks

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 173.—Ed.]

[2] [A favourite passage, see *ante*, vol. iii. p. 40.—Ed.]

Hawk. Apoph. p. 201. he can amuse or inform mankind, and they must be the best judges of his pretensions.

He thought worse of the vices of retirement than of those of society.

He attended Mr. Thrale in his last moments, and stayed in the room praying, as is imagined, till he had drawn his last breath. "His servants," said he, "would have waited upon him in this awful period, and why not his friend?"

He was extremely fond of reading the lives of great and learned persons. Two or three years before he died, he applied to a friend of his to give him a list of those in the French language that were well written and genuine. He said that Bolingbroke had declared he could not read Middleton's "Life of Cicero."

He was not apt to judge ill of persons without good reasons: an old friend of his used to say that in general he thought too well of mankind.

One day, on seeing an old terrier lie asleep by the fireside at Streatham, he said, "Presto, you are, if possible, a more lazy dog than I am."

Being told that Churchill had abused him under the character of Pomposo, in his Ghost, "I always thought," said he, "he was a shallow fellow, and I think so still."

The Duke of * * * once said to Johnson, "that every religion had a certain degree of morality in it." "Ay, my lord," answered he, "but the Christian religion alone puts it on its proper basis."

The picture of him by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which was painted for Mr. Beauclerk, and is now Mr. Langton's, and scraped in mezzotinto by Doughty, is extremely like him: there is in it that appearance of a labouring working mind, of an indolent reposing

body, which he had to a very great degree. Indeed, the common operations of dressing, shaving, &c. were a toil to him: he held the care of the body very cheap. He used to say, that a man who rode out for an appetite consulted but little the dignity of human nature. Hawk. Apoph. p. 204.

"The Life of Charles XII.," by Voltaire, he said was one of the finest pieces of history ever written.

He used to say something tantamount to this: When a woman affects learning, she makes a rivalry between the two sexes for the same accomplishments, which ought not to be, their provinces being different. Milton said before him,

> "For contemplation he and valour form'd,
> For softness she and sweet attractive grace."

And upon hearing a lady of his acquaintance commended for her learning, he said, "A man is in general better pleased when he has a good dinner upon his table than when his wife talks Greek. My old friend Mrs. Carter," he added, "could make a pudding as well as translate Epictetus from the Greek, and work a handkerchief as well as compose a poem." He thought, however, that she was too reserved in conversation upon subjects she was so eminently able to converse upon, which was occasioned by her modesty and fear of giving offence.

He said that when he first conversed with Mr. Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, he was very much inclined to believe he had been there; but that he had afterwards altered his opinion.

He was much pleased with Dr. Jortin's[1] Sermons, the language of which he thought very elegant; but thought his "Life of Erasmus" a dull book.

He thought Cato the best model of tragedy we had; yet he used to say, of all things, the most

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 103.—Ed.]

Hawk. Apoph. p. 207. ridiculous would be to see a girl cry at the representation of it.

He thought the happiest life was that of a man of business, with some literary pursuits for his amusement; and that in general no one could be virtuous or happy that was not completely employed.

Johnson had read much in the works of Bishop Taylor: in his Dutch "Thomas à Kempis" he has quoted him occasionally in the margin.

He is said to have very frequently made sermons for clergymen at a guinea a-piece.

He had a great opinion of the knowledge procured by conversation with intelligent and ingenious persons. His first question concerning such as had that character was ever, "What is his conversation?"

Speaking one day of tea, he said, "What a delightful beverage must that be that pleases all palates at a time when they can take nothing else at breakfast!"

Speaking of schoolmasters, he used to say they were worse than the Egyptian taskmasters of old. "No boy," says he, "is sure any day he goes to school to escape a whipping. How can the schoolmaster tell what the boy has really forgotten, and what he has neglected to learn? what he has had no opportunities of learning, and what he has taken no pains to get at the knowledge of? yet for any of these, however difficult they may be, the boy is obnoxious to punishment."

Of a member of parliament, who, after having harangued for some hours in the house of commons, came into a company where Johnson was, and endeavoured to talk him down, he said, "This man has a pulse in his tongue[1]."

[1] [The editor does not see the point of this.—Ed.]

One who had long known Johnson said of him, "In general you may tell what the man to whom you are speaking will say next: this you can never do of Johnson: his images, his allusions, his great powers of ridicule, throw the appearance of novelty upon the most common conversation." Hawk. Apoph. p. 211.

He was extremely fond of Dr. Hammond's[1] works, and sometimes gave them as a present to young men going into orders: he also bought them for the library at Streatham.

He said he was always hurt when he found himself ignorant of any thing.

He was extremely accurate in his computation of time. He could tell how many heroick Latin verses could be repeated in such a given portion of it, and was anxious that his friends should take pains to form in their minds some measure for estimating the lapse of it.

"Complainers," said he, "are always loud and clamorous."

He thought highly of Mandeville's "Treatise on the Hypochondriacal Disease."

"I wrote," said Johnson, "the first seventy lines in the 'Vanity of Human Wishes'[2] in the course of one morning, in that small house beyond the church at Hampstead. The whole number was composed before I committed a single couplet to writing. The same method I pursued in regard to the Prologue on opening Drury-lane Theatre. I did not afterwards change more than a word in it, and that was done

[1] [Henry Hammond, D. D., born in 1605; elected a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1625; canon of Christchurch, 1645. He suffered much persecution during the Rebellion, and was, it is said, designed for the bishoprick of Worcester at the Restoration; but he died a few days before the king's return. He was a very voluminous writer, but his best known work is "A Paraphrase and Annotations on the New Testament," which Dr. Johnson recommended to Mr. Boswell. *Ante*, vol. iii. p. 424.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 167.—Ed.]

Hawk. Apoph. p. 213.

at the remonstrance of Garrick. I did not think his criticism just, but it was necessary that he should be satisfied with what he was to utter."

To a gentleman who expressed himself in disrespectful terms of Blackmore, one of whose poetick bulls he happened just then to recollect, Dr. Johnson answered, "I hope, sir, a blunder, after you have heard what I shall relate, will not be reckoned decisive against a poet's reputation. When I was a young man, I translated Addison's Latin poem on the Battle of the Pygmies and the Cranes, and must plead guilty to the following couplet:

> Down from the guardian boughs the nests they flung,
> And kill'd the yet unanimated young.

And yet I trust I am no blockhead. I afterwards changed the word *kill'd* into *crush'd*."

"I am convinced," said he to a friend, "I ought to be present at divine service[1] more frequently than I am; but the provocations given by ignorant and affected preachers too often disturb the mental calm which otherwise would succeed to prayer. I am apt to whisper to myself on such occasions, How can this illiterate fellow dream of fixing attention, after we have been listening to the sublimest truths, conveyed in the most chaste and exalted language, throughout a liturgy which must be regarded as the genuine offspring of piety impregnated by wisdom! Take notice, however, though I make this confession respecting myself, I do not mean to recommend the fastidiousness that sometimes leads me to exchange congregational for solitary worship." He was at Streatham church when Dodd's first application to him was made, and went out of his pew immediately, to write an answer to the letter he had received. After-

[1] [*Ante*, vol. ii. p. 5.—Ed.]

wards, when he related this circumstance, he added, "I hope I shall be pardoned, if once I deserted the service of God for that of man." Hawk. Apoph. p. 215.

His knowledge in manufactures was extensive, and his comprehension relative to mechanical contrivances was still more extraordinary. The well-known Mr. Arkwright pronounced him to be the only person who on a first view understood both the principle and powers of his most complicated piece of machinery.

He would not allow the verb *derange*, a word at present much in use, to be an English word. "Sir," said a gentleman who had some pretensions to literature, "I have seen it in a book." "Not in a *bound* book," said Johnson; "*disarrange* is the word we ought to use instead of it[1]."

He thought very favourably of the profession of the law, and said that the sages thereof, for a long series backward, had been friends to religion. Fortescue says that their afternoon's employment was the study of the scriptures[2].]

Though, from my very high admiration of Johnson, I have wondered that he was not courted by all the great and all the eminent persons of his time, it ought fairly to be considered, that no man of humble

[1] [Even so late as the year 1795, a writer in the *British Critic* censured as a gallicism Mr. Burke's use of *derange* for *disarrange*.—Ed.]

[2] [Lord Coke, in his Institutes, l. 2. c. 1. s. 85. quotes these ancient, as he calls them, verses, recommending a proper distribution of the time of a law-student.

"Sex horæ somno, totidem des legibus æquis,
Quatuor orabis, des epulisque duas
Quod superest ultrò sacris largire Camænis."

Of these Sir William Jones made two versions:

"Six hours to sleep, to law's grave study six;
Four spend in prayer—the rest on nature fix:"

rather (he adds),

"Six hours to law, to soothing slumber seven;
Ten to the world allot, and all to Heaven."

It is not very clear what *nature* in the first version means; in the second Sir William has shortened his day to twenty-three hours: and the general advice "of *all to Heaven*" destroys the peculiar appropriation of a certain period to religious exercises.—Ed.]

birth, who lived entirely by literature, in short no authour by profession, ever rose in this country into that personal notice which he did. In the course of this work a numerous variety of names has been mentioned, to which many might be added. I cannot omit Lord and Lady Lucan[1], at whose house he often enjoyed all that an elegant table and the best company can contribute to happiness: he found hospitality united with extraordinary accomplishments, and embellished with charms of which no man could be insensible.

On Tuesday, 22d June, I dined with him at the Literary Club, the last time of his being in that respectable society. The other members present were the Bishop of St. Asaph, Lord Eliot, Lord Palmerston, Dr. Fordyce, and Mr. Malone. He looked ill, but had such a manly fortitude, that he did not trouble the company with melancholy complaints. They all showed evident marks of kind concern about him, with which he was much pleased, and he exerted himself to be as entertaining as his indisposition allowed him.

The anxiety of his friends to preserve so estimable a life as long as human means might be supposed to have influence made them plan for him a retreat from the severity of a British winter to the mild climate of Italy. This scheme was at last brought to a serious resolution at General Paoli's, where I had often talked of it. One essential matter, however, I understood was necessary to be previously settled, which was obtaining such an addition to his income as would be sufficient to enable him to defray the expense in a manner becoming the first literary character of a great nation, and, independent of all his other merits, the authour of the "Dictionary of

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 386, *n.*, where Lord Lucan (though not an English peer) should have been noted as an exception.—Ed.]

the English Language." The person to whom I above all others thought I should apply to negotiate this business was the lord chancellor, because I knew that he highly valued Johnson, and that Johnson highly valued his lordship, so that it was no degradation of my illustrious friend to solicit for him the favour of such a man. I have mentioned what Johnson said of him to me when he was at the bar[1]; and after his lordship was advanced to the seals, he said of him, "I would prepare myself for no man in England but Lord Thurlow. When I am to meet with him, I should wish to know a day before[2]." How he would have prepared himself, I cannot conjecture. Would he have selected certain topicks, and considered them in every view, so as to be in readiness to argue them at all points? and what may we suppose those topicks to have been? I once started the curious inquiry to the great man who was the subject of this compliment: he smiled, but did not pursue it.

I first consulted with Sir Joshua Reynolds, who perfectly coincided in opinion with me; and I therefore, though personally very little known to his lordship, wrote to him[3], stating the case, and requesting his good offices for Dr. Johnson. I mentioned that

[1] [See *ante*, p. 58.—Ed.]

[2] [As this was not said to Mr. Boswell himself, the editor ventures to disbelieve that it was said at all. It is very nearly nonsense, and the kind of nonsense the least like any thing that Doctor Johnson could say. Mr. Boswell, it seems, repeated the story to Lord Thurlow, and his lordship "*smiled*"—perhaps at so direct and awkward an attempt at flattery.—Ed.]

[3] It is strange that Sir John Hawkins should have related that the application was made by Sir Joshua Reynolds, when he could so easily have been informed of the truth by inquiring of Sir Joshua. Sir John's carelessness to ascertain facts is very remarkable.—Boswell. [Mr. Boswell is, as usual, unjust towards Sir J. Hawkins. Johnson's own letter of thanks to Lord Thurlow mentions Sir Joshua as the channel of communication on the subject, and does not allude to Boswell; so that Hawkins had no reason to suspect that Mr. Boswell had any thing to do with it; and we shall see by and by some reason to suspect that Sir Joshua was not anxious that Mr. Boswell's name should appear in the transaction. The editor cannot guess why Mr. Boswell did not print his own letter to Lord Thurlow, which is now given from a copy in his hand, in the Reynolds papers.—Ed.]

I was obliged to set out for Scotland early in the following week, so that if his lordship should have any commands for me as to this pious negotiation, he would be pleased to send them before that time, otherwise Sir Joshua Reynolds would give all attention to it.

[The following is a copy of this letter:

"MR. BOSWELL TO LORD THURLOW.

"General Paoli's, Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square, 24th June, 1784.

Reyn. MSS. "MY LORD,—Dr. Samuel Johnson, though wonderfully recovered from a complication of dangerous illness, is by no means well, and I have reason to think that his valuable life cannot be preserved long without the benignant influence of a southern climate.

"It would therefore be of very great moment were he to go to Italy before winter sets in; and I know he wishes it much. But the objection is, that his pension of three hundred pounds a year would not be sufficient to defray his expense, and make it convenient for M. Sastres, an ingenious and worthy native of that country, and a teacher of Italian here, to accompany him.

"As I am well assured of your lordship's regard for Dr. Johnson, I presume, without his knowledge, so far to indulge my anxious concern for him, as to intrude upon your lordship with this suggestion, being persuaded that if a representation of the matter were made to his majesty by proper authority, the royal bounty would be extended in a suitable manner.

"Your lordship, I cannot doubt, will forgive me for taking this liberty. I even flatter myself you will approve of it. I am to set out for Scotland on Monday morning, so that if your lordship should have any commands for me as to this pious negotiation, you will be pleased to send them before that time. But Sir Joshua Reynolds, with whom I have consulted, will be here, and will gladly give all attention to it. I am, with very great respect, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most humble servant, "JAMES BOSWELL."]

This application was made not only without any suggestion on the part of Johnson himself, but was utterly unknown to him, nor had he the smallest

suspicion of it. Any insinuations, therefore, which since his death have been thrown out, as if he had stooped to ask what was superfluous, are without any foundation. But, had he asked it, it would not have been superfluous; for though the money he had saved proved to be more than his friends imagined, or than I believe he himself, in his carelessness concerning worldly matters, knew it to be, had he travelled upon the continent, an augmentation of his income would by no means have been unnecessary.

On Wednesday, June 23, I visited him in the morning, after having been present at the shocking sight[1] of fifteen men executed before Newgate. I said to him I was sure that human life was not machinery, that is to say, a chain of fatality planned and directed by the Supreme Being, as it had in it so much wickedness and misery, so many instances of both, as that by which my mind was now clouded. Were it machinery, it would be better than it is in these respects, though less noble, as not being a system of moral government. He agreed with me now, as he always did, upon the great question of the liberty of the human will, which has been in all ages perplexed with so much sophistry: "But, sir, as to the doctrine of necessity, no man believes it. If a man should give me arguments that I do not see, though I could not answer them, should I believe that I do not see?" It will be observed, that Johnson at all times made the just distinction between doctrines *contrary* to reason, and doctrines *above* reason.

Talking of the religious discipline proper for unhappy convicts, he said, "Sir, one of our regular clergy will probably not impress their minds suf-

[1] [A shocking sight indeed!—but Mr. Boswell was fond of enjoying those shocking sights, which yet, he said, "clouded his mind."—ED.]

ficiently: they should be attended by a methodist preacher[1], or a popish priest." Let me however observe, in justice to the Reverend Mr. Vilette, who has been ordinary of Newgate for no less than eighteen years, in the course of which he has attended many hundreds of wretched criminals, that his earnest and humane exhortations have been very effectual. His extraordinary diligence is highly praiseworthy, and merits a distinguished reward[2].

On Thursday, June 24, I dined with him at Mr. Dilly's, where were the Rev. Mr. (now Dr.) Knox, master of Tunbridge School, Mr. Smith, vicar of Southill, Dr. Beattie, Mr. Pinkerton, authour of various literary performances[3], and the Rev. Dr. Mayo. At my desire old Mr. Sheridan was invited, as I was earnest to have Johnson and him brought together again by chance, that a reconciliation might be effected. Mr. Sheridan happened to come early, and having learnt that Dr. Johnson was to be there, went away; so I found, with sincere regret, that my friendly intentions were hopeless[4]. I recollect nothing that passed this day, except Johnson's quickness, who, when Dr. Beattie observed, as something remarkable which had happened to him, that he had chanced to see both No. 1 and No. 1000 of the hackney-coaches, the first and the last—"Why, sir," said Johnson, "there is an equal chance for one's seeing those two numbers as any other two." He was clearly right; yet the seeing of the two extremes, each of which is

[1] A friend of mine happened to be passing by a *field congregation* in the environs of London, when a methodist preacher quoted this passage with triumph. —BOSWELL.

[2] I trust that the City of London, now happily in unison with the Court, will have the justice and generosity to obtain preferment for this reverend gentleman, now a worthy old servant of that magnificent corporation.—BOSWELL. [This wish was not accomplished. Mr. Vilette died in April, 1799, having been nearly thirty years chaplain of Newgate.—ED.]

[3] [The same whose correspondence has been lately published.—ED.]

[4] [No doubt Mr. Boswell's intentions were friendly, but he certainly had himself contributed by his indiscretions to keep alive the old animosity.—ED.]

in some degree more conspicuous than the rest, could not but strike one in a stronger manner than the sight of any other two numbers.—Though I have neglected to preserve his conversation, it was perhaps at this interview that Dr. Knox formed the notion of it which he has exhibited in his "Winter Evenings."

On Friday, June 25, I dined with him at General Paoli's, where, he says in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, "I love to dine." There was a variety of dishes much to his taste, of all which he seemed to me to eat so much, that I was afraid he might be hurt by it; and I whispered to the general my fear, and begged he might not press him. "Alas!" said the general, "see how very ill he looks; he can live but a very short time. Would you refuse any slight gratifications to a man under sentence of death? There is a humane custom in Italy, by which persons in that melancholy situation are indulged with having whatever they like best to eat and drink, even with expensive delicacies."

I showed him some verses on Lichfield by Miss Seward, which I had that day received from her, and had the pleasure to hear him approve of them. He confirmed to me the truth of a high compliment which I had been told he had paid to that lady, when she mentioned to him "The Columbiade," an epick poem, by Madame du Boccage:—"Madam, there is not any thing equal to your description of the sea round the North Pole, in your Ode on the Death of Captain Cook."

[I have thus quoted a compliment paid by Dr. Johnson to one of this lady's poetical pieces, and I have withheld his opinion of herself, thinking that she might not like it. I am afraid that it has reached her by some other means, and thus we may account for the various attacks made by her on her venerable

Gent. Mag. 1793, p. 1011.

townsman since his decease; some avowed, and with her own name—others, I believe, in various forms and under several signatures. What are we to think of the scraps[1] of letters between her and Mr. Hayley, impotently attempting to undermine the noble pedestal on which public opinion has placed Dr. Johnson[2].]

[1] [A specimen of these scraps will amuse the reader, and more than justify Mr. Boswell's censure of Miss Seward.

"MISS SEWARD TO MR. HAYLEY.

"1782.

"You have seen Dr. Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets:' they have excited your generous indignation: a heart like Mr. Hayley's would shrink back astonished to perceive a mind so enriched with the power of genius, capable of such cool malignity. Yet the *Gentleman's Magazine* praised these unworthy efforts to blight the laurels of undoubted fame. O that the venom may fall where it ought!—that the breath of public contempt may blow it from the beauteous wreaths," &c. &c. "I turn from this *comet* in literature (*Dr. Johnson*) to its SUN,—*Mr. Hayley!*"

"MR. HAYLEY TO MISS SEWARD.

"5th August.

"I have read the 'Lives of the Poets' with as much indignation as you can give me credit for—with a strange mixture of detestation and delight. As his language, to give the devil his due, is frequently sublime and enriched with certain diabolical graces of his own, I continue to listen to him, whenever he speaks, with an equal mixture of admiration and abhorrence."

Hayley seems to have been puzzled between his real admiration of Johnson and his wish to appear to share the indignation of his fair correspondent, who evidently did not like the expression of "*delight*" and "*admiration*" with which Hayley had qualified his assent. She therefore artfully enough seeks to inlist him more thoroughly in her cause by insinuating that Johnson, who was then at Lichfield, and whom, after Churchill, she calls "*Immane Pomposo*," had spoken coldly of Hayley's poetry, while she "*kept an indignant silence.*" This partly succeeds, and Hayley's reply is a little more satisfactory to the ireful lady.

"25th October.

"Your account of *Pomposo* delights me—that noble leviathan who lashes the troubled waters into a sublime but mischievous storm of turbulence and mud," &c.

But she was still dissatisfied:—"I am dubious," she says, "about the epithet *noble*;" and then she proceeds with a long see-saw *galimathias* of praise and dispraise of his charity and genius on the one hand, and of his acrimony, envy, malignity, bigotry, and superstition, on the other.

Miss Seward stated afterwards that this trash had been *published* without her consent; though she admitted having sent it to some of her distant friends, "*induced* by the wit and elegance of the *Hayleian* passages." This latter motive the editor is sorry to say he wholly disbelieves, for he finds that the *Hayleian* passages are but *two*, and contain but *thirty-two lines* of the letter-press; while Miss Seward's own are *four* in number, and extend to a *hundred and ninety-one lines*; that the correspondence begins and ends with *her*, and clearly has no objects whatsoever but to exalt herself and depreciate Dr. Johnson. Mr. Hayley attempted to ridicule Johnson in the character of *Rumble* in one of his dull rhyming comedies, and in a Dialogue of the Dead, which was dead-born.—ED.]

[2] [This passage is an extract from Mr. Boswell's controversy with Miss Seward.—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1793, p. 1011.—ED.]

"TO MRS. THRALE. Letters, vol. ii. p. 373.

"London, 26th June, 1784.

"A message came to me yesterday to tell me that Macbean is dead, after three days of illness. He was one of those who, as Swift says, *stood as a screen between me and death.* He has, I hope, made a good exchange. He was very pious; he was very innocent; he did no ill; and of doing good a continual tenour of distress allowed him few opportunities: he was very highly esteemed in the house[1].]

On Sunday, June 27, I found him rather better. I mentioned to him a young man who was going to Jamaica with his wife and children, in expectation of being provided for by two of her brothers settled in that island, one a clergyman and the other a physician. JOHNSON. "It is a wild scheme, sir, unless he has a positive and deliberate invitation. There was a poor girl, who used to come about me, who had a cousin in Barbadoes, that, in a letter to her, expressed a wish she should come out to that island, and expatiated on the comforts and happiness of her situation. The poor girl went out: her cousin was much surprised, and asked her how she could think of coming. 'Because,' said she, 'you invited me.'—'Not I,' answered the cousin. The letter was then produced. 'I see it is true,' said she, 'that I did invite you: but I did not think you would come.' They lodged her in an out-house, where she passed her time miserably; and as soon as she had an opportunity she returned to England. Always tell this when you hear of people going abroad to relations upon a notion of being well received. In the case which you mention, it is probable the clergyman spends all he gets, and the physician does not know how much he is to get."

We this day dined at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, with

[1] [The Charter-House, into which Johnson had procured his admission.—ED.]

General Paoli, Lord Eliot (formerly Mr. Eliot, of Port Eliot), Dr. Beattie, and some other company. Talking of Lord Chesterfield;—JOHNSON. "His manner was exquisitely elegant, and he had more knowledge than I expected." BOSWELL. "Did you find, sir, his conversation to be of a superior style?" JOHNSON. "Sir, in the conversation which I had with him I had the best right to superiority, for it was upon philology and literature." Lord Eliot, who had travelled at the same time with Mr. Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield's natural son, justly observed, that it was strange that a man who showed he had so much affection for his son as Lord Chesterfield did, by writing so many long and anxious letters to him, almost all of them when he was secretary of state, which certainly was a proof of great goodness of disposition, should endeavour to make his son a rascal. His lordship told us that Foote had intended to bring on the stage a father who had thus tutored his son, and to show the son an honest man to every one else, but practising his father's maxims upon him, and cheating him. JOHNSON. "I am much pleased with this design; but I think there was no occasion to make the son honest at all. No; he should be a consummate rogue: the contrast between honesty and knavery would be the stronger. It should be contrived so that the father should be the only sufferer by the son's villany, and thus there would be poetical justice."

Hawk. Apoph. 209. [Johnson said that he had once seen Mr. Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield's son, at Dodsley's shop, and was so much struck with his awkward manner and appearance, that he could not help asking Mr. Dodsley who he was.]

He put Lord Eliot in mind of Dr. Walter Harte[1].

[1] [See *ante*, vol. I. p. 375.—ED.]

"I know," said he, "Harte was your lordship's tutor, and he was also tutor to the Peterborough family. Pray, my lord, do you recollect any particulars that he told you of Lord Peterborough? He is a favourite of mine[1], and is not enough known; his character has been only ventilated in party pamphlets." Lord Eliot said, if Dr. Johnson would be so good as to ask him any questions, he would tell what he could recollect. Accordingly some things were mentioned. "But," said his lordship, "the best account of Lord Peterborough that I have happened to meet with is in 'Captain Carleton's Memoirs.' Carleton was descended of an ancestor who had distinguished himself at the siege of Derry. He was an officer; and, what was rare at that time, had some knowledge of engineering." Johnson said, he had never heard of the book. Lord Eliot had it at Port Eliot; but, after a good deal of inquiry, procured a copy in London[2], and sent it to Johnson, who told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he was going to bed when it came, but was so much pleased with it, that he sat up till he had read it through, and found in it such an air of truth, that he could not doubt of its authenticity; adding, with a smile (in allusion to Lord Eliot's having recently been raised to the peerage), "I did not think a *young lord* could have mentioned to me a book in the English history that was not known to me."

An addition to our company came after we went up to the drawing-room; Dr. Johnson seemed to rise in spirits as his audience increased. He said, he wished Lord Orford's pictures[3] and Sir Ashton Lever's museum[4] might be purchased by the publick,

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 418, his observation on Pope's *noble* friends.—Ed.]

[2] [Carleton's very amusing *Memoirs* were republished in 1808, in an 8vo. volume.—Ed.]

[3] [The fine Houghton collection, which was sold to the Empress of Russia.—Ed.]

[4] [Sir Ashton Lever was knighted by George the Third. He died in 1788.

because both the money, and the pictures, and the curiosities would remain in the country; whereas if they were sold into another kingdom, the nation would indeed get some money, but would lose the pictures and curiosities, which it would be desirable we should have for improvement in taste and natural history. The only question was, as the nation was much in want of money, whether it would not be better to take a large price from a foreign state?

He entered upon a curious discussion of the difference between intuition and sagacity; one being immediate in its effect, the other requiring a circuitous process; one, he observed, was the *eye* of the mind, the other the *nose* of the mind[1].

A young gentleman[2] present took up the argument against him, and maintained that no man ever thinks of the *nose of the mind*, not adverting that though that figurative sense seems strange to us, as very unusual, it is truly not more forced than Hamlet's "In my *mind's eye*, Horatio." He persisted much too long, and appeared to Johnson as putting himself forward as his antagonist with too much presumption: upon which he called to him in a loud tone, "What is it you are contending for, if you *be* contending?"—And afterwards imagining that the gentleman retorted upon him with a kind of smart drollery, he said, "Mr. *****, it does not become you to talk so to me. Besides, ridicule is not your talent; you have *there* neither intuition nor sagacity."—The gentle-

His celebrated museum (valued before a committee of the house of commons at 53,000*l.*) was disposed of, in 1784, by a private lottery, to Mr. Parkinson, who removed it to Albion-place, Blackfriars-bridge, where it was for many years open as an exhibition. The several articles of which it was composed were afterwards sold separately by auction.—Ed.]

[1] [These illustrations were probably suggested by the radical meaning of the words, the first of which, in Latin, properly belongs to *sight*, and the latter to *smell*.—Ed.]

[2] [The epithet "*young*" was added after the two first editions, and the ***** substituted instead of a dash ———, which lead to a suspicion that young Mr. Burke was meant.—Ed.]

man protested that he had intended no improper freedom, but had the greatest respect for Dr. Johnson. After a short pause, during which we were somewhat uneasy;—JOHNSON. "Give me your hand, sir. You were too tedious, and I was too short." Mr. *****. "Sir, I am honoured by your attention in any way." JOHNSON. "Come, sir, let's have no more of it. We offended one another by our contention; let us not offend the company by our compliments."

He now said, he wished much to go to Italy, and that he dreaded passing the winter in England. I said nothing; but enjoyed a secret satisfaction in thinking that I had taken the most effectual measures to make such a scheme practicable.

On Monday, June 28, I had the honour to receive from the Lord Chancellor the following letter:

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"SIR,—I should have answered your letter immediately, if (being much engaged when I received it) I had not put it in my pocket, and forgot to open it till this morning.

"I am much obliged to you for the suggestion, and I will adopt and press it as far as I can. The best argument, I am sure, and I hope it is not likely to fail, is Dr. Johnson's merit. But it will be necessary, if I should be so unfortunate as to miss seeing you, to converse with Sir Joshua on the sum it will be proper to ask,—in short, upon the means of setting him out. It would be a reflection on us all if such a man should perish for want of the means to take care of his health. Yours, &c.

"THURLOW."

This letter gave me very high satisfaction; I next day went and showed it to Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was exceedingly pleased with it. He thought that I should now communicate the negotiation to Dr. Johnson, who might afterwards complain if the attention with which he had been honoured should be too long concealed from him. I intended to set out for Scotland next morning; but Sir Joshua cordially

insisted that I should stay another day, that Johnson and I might dine with him, that we three might talk of his Italian tour, and, as Sir Joshua expressed himself, "have it all out." I hastened to Johnson, and was told by him that he was rather better to-day. BOSWELL. "I am very anxious about you, sir, and particularly that you should go to Italy for the winter, which I believe is your own wish." JOHNSON. "It is, sir." BOSWELL. "You have no objection, I presume, but the money it would require." JOHNSON. "Why, no, sir." Upon which I gave him a particular account of what had been done, and read to him the Lord Chancellor's letter. He listened with much attention; then warmly said, "This is taking prodigious pains about a man." "O, sir," said I, with most sincere affection, "your friends would do every thing for you." He paused,—grew more and more agitated,—till tears started into his eyes, and he exclaimed with fervent emotion, "GOD bless you all!" I was so affected that I also shed tears. After a short silence, he renewed and extended his grateful benediction, "GOD bless you all, for JESUS CHRIST's sake." We both remained for some time unable to speak. He rose suddenly and quitted the room, quite melted in tenderness. He staid but a short time, till he had recovered his firmness; soon after he returned I left him, having first engaged him to dine at Sir Joshua Reynolds's next day. I never was again under that roof which I had so long reverenced.

On Wednesday, June 30, the friendly confidential dinner with Sir Joshua Reynolds took place, no other company being present. Had I known that this was the last time that I should enjoy in this world the conversation of a friend whom I so much respected, and from whom I derived so much instruc-

tion and entertainment, I should have been deeply affected. When I now look back to it, I am vexed that a single word should have been forgotten.

Both Sir Joshua and I were so sanguine in our expectations, that we expatiated with confidence on the liberal provision which we were sure would be made for him, conjecturing whether munificence would be displayed in one large donation, or in an ample increase of his pension. He himself catched so much of our enthusiasm as to allow himself to suppose it not impossible that our hopes might in one way or other be realized. He said that he would rather have his pension doubled than a grant of a thousand pounds; "For," said he, "though probably I may not live to receive as much as a thousand pounds, a man would have the consciousness that he should pass the remainder of his life in splendour, how long soever it might be." Considering what a moderate proportion an income of six hundred pounds a-year bears to innumerable fortunes in this country, it is worthy of remark, that a man so truly great should think it splendour.

As an instance of extraordinary liberality of friendship, he told us that Dr. Brocklesby had upon this occasion offered him a hundred a-year for his life[1]. A grateful tear started into his eye, as he spoke this in a faltering tone.

[1] [It should be recollected that the amiable and accomplished man who made this generous offer to the *tory* champion was a keen *whig*; and it is stated in the *Biographical Dictionary*, that he pressed Johnson in his last illness to remove to his house for the more immediate convenience of medical advice. Dr. Brocklesby died in 1797, æt. 76. He was a very intimate friend of the celebrated Charles Townshend, as well as of Mr. Burke, to whom he had bequeathed 1000*l.* in his will; but recollecting that he might outlive his friend, or that the legacy might fall when Mr. Burke did not want it, he requested him to accept it from his living hand, "*ut pignus amicitiæ*." Doctor Brocklesby's name was the subject of one of Mr. Burke's playful puns. There was, cotemporary with him, in London, a low quack who called himself *Doctor Rock*. One day Mr. Burke called Brocklesby *Doctor Rock*, and on his taking some offence at this disreputable appellation, Burke undertook to prove *algebraically* that Rock was his proper name; thus, "*Brock—b=Rock*;" or "Brock *less* b, makes Rock." Q. E. D.—Ed.]

Sir Joshua and I endeavoured to flatter his imagination with agreeable prospects of happiness in Italy. "Nay," said he, "I must not expect much of that; when a man goes to Italy merely to feel how he breathes the air, he can enjoy very little."

Our conversation turned upon living in the country, which Johnson, whose melancholy mind required the dissipation of quick successive variety, had habituated himself to consider as a kind of mental imprisonment. "Yet, sir," said I, "there are many people who are content to live in the country." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is in the intellectual world as in the physical world: we are told by natural philosophers that a body is at rest in the place that is fit for it; they who are content to live in the country are *fit* for the country."

Talking of various enjoyments, I argued that a refinement of taste was a disadvantage, as they who have attained to it must be seldomer pleased than those who have no nice discrimination, and are therefore satisfied with every thing that comes in their way. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, that is a paltry notion. Endeavour to be as perfect as you can in every respect."

I accompanied him in Sir Joshua Reynolds's coach to the entry of Bolt-court. He asked me whether I would not go with him to his house; I declined it, from an apprehension that my spirits would sink. We bade adieu to each other affectionately in the carriage. When he had got down upon the foot-pavement, he called out, "Fare you well!" and, without looking back, sprang away with a kind of pathetick briskness, if I may use that expression, which seemed to indicate a struggle to conceal uneasiness, and impressed me with a foreboding of our long, long separation.

I remained one day more in town, to have the

chance of talking over my negotiation with the Lord Chancellor; but the multiplicity of his lordship's important engagements did not allow of it; so I left the management of the business in the hands of Sir Joshua Reynolds."

Soon after this time Dr. Johnson had the mortification of being informed by Mrs. Thrale, that "what she supposed he never believed" was true; namely, that she was actually going to marry Signor Piozzi, an Italian musick-master.

["MRS. PIOZZI[1] TO DR. JOHNSON. Letters, vol. ii. p. 375.

"Bath, 30th June, [1784.]

"MY DEAR SIR,—The enclosed is a circular letter, which I have sent to all the guardians; but our friendship demands somewhat more: it requires that I should beg your pardon for concealing from you a connexion which you must have heard of by many, but I suppose never believed. Indeed, my dear sir, it was concealed only to save us both needless pain. I could not have borne to reject that counsel it would have killed me to take, and I only tell it you now because all is irrevocably settled, and out of your power to prevent. I will say, however, that the dread of your disapprobation has given me some anxious moments, and though, perhaps, I am become by many privations the most independent woman in the world, I feel as if acting without a parent's consent till you write kindly to your faithful servant, "H. L. P."]

He endeavoured to prevent it; but in vain.

[The following is the only letter of Dr. Johnson on this subject which she has published:— ED.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. PIOZZI, Letters, vol. ii. p. 376.

"London, July 8th, 1784.

"DEAR MADAM,—What you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent, as it has not been in-

[1] [In the lady's own publication of the correspondence, this letter is given as from Mrs. *Piozzi*, and is signed with the initial of her new name; Dr. Johnson's answer is also addressed to Mrs. *Piozzi*, and both the letters allude to the matter as *done*; yet it appears by the periodical publications of the day that the marriage did not take place until the 25*th July*. The editor knows not how to account for this but by supposing that Mrs. Piozzi, to avoid Johnson's importunities, had stated that as done which was only *settled to be done*. Any reader who is curious about this miserable *mésalliance* will find it most acrimoniously discussed in Baretti's *Strictures* in the European Magazine for 1788.—ED.]

Letters, vol. ii. p. 376.

jurious to me: I therefore breathe out one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps useless, but at least sincere.

"I wish that God may grant you every blessing, that you may be happy in this world for its short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever I can contribute to your happiness I am very ready to repay, for that kindness which soothed twenty years of a life radically wretched.

"Do not think slightly of the advice which I now presume to offer. Prevail upon M. Piozzi to settle in England: you may live here with more dignity than in Italy, and with more security: your rank will be higher and your fortune more under your own eye. I desire not to detail all my reasons, but every argument of prudence and interest is for England, and only some phantoms of imagination seduce you to Italy.

"I am afraid, however, that my counsel is vain; yet I have eased my heart by giving it.

"When Queen Mary took the resolution of sheltering herself in England, the Archbishop of St. Andrew's attempting to dissuade her, attended on her journey; and when they came to the irremeable stream that separated the two kingdoms, walked by her side into the water, in the middle of which he seized her bridle, and with earnestness proportioned to her danger and his own affection pressed her to return. The queen went forward. If the parallel reaches thus far, may it go no farther. The tears stand in my eyes.

"I am going into Derbyshire, and hope to be followed by your good wishes, for I am, with great affection, your, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"Any letters that come for me hither will be sent me."]

If she would publish the whole of the correspondence that passed between Dr. Johnson and her on the subject, we should have a full view of his real sentiments. As it is, our judgment must be biassed by that characteristick specimen which Sir John Hawkins has given us [in the following passage[1]].

Hawk. p. 567.

[About the middle of 1784, he was, to appearance, so well, that both himself and his friends hoped that he had some years to live. He had recovered from the paralytic stroke of the last year to such

[1] [Here Mr. Boswell had inserted a few lines of the passage, which the editor thinks right to give in full.—ED.]

a degree, that, saving a little difficulty in his articulation, he had no remains of it: he had also undergone a slight fit of the gout, and conquered an oppression on his lungs, so as to be able, as himself told me, to run up the whole staircase of the Royal Academy, on the day of the annual dinner there. In short, to such a degree of health was he restored, that he forgot all his complaints: he resumed sitting to Opie for his picture, which had been begun the year before, but, I believe, was never finished, and accepted an invitation to the house of a friend at Ashbourn in Derbyshire, proposing to stay there till towards the end of the summer, and, in his return, to visit Mrs. Porter, his daughter-in-law, and others of his friends, at Lichfield. Hawk. p. 568.

A few weeks before his setting out, he was made uneasy by a report that the widow of his friend Mr. Thrale was about to dispose of herself in marriage to a foreigner, a singer by profession, and with him to quit the kingdom. Upon this occasion he took the alarm, and to prevent a degradation of herself, and, what as executor of her husband was more his concern, the desertion of her children, wrote to her, she then being at Bath, a letter, of which the following spurious copy was inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine for December, 1784:—

"Madam,—If you are already ignominiously married, you are lost beyond redemption;—if you are not, permit me one hour's conversation, to convince you that such a marriage must not take place. If, after a whole hour's reasoning, you should not be convinced, you will still be at liberty to act as you think proper. I have been extremely ill, and am still ill; but if you grant me the audience I ask, I will instantly take a post-chaise and attend you at Bath. Pray do not refuse this favour to a man who hath so many years loved and honoured you."

That this letter is spurious, as to the language, I have Johnson's own authority for saying; but, in

Hawk. p. 569.

respect of the sentiments, he avowed it, in a declaration to me, that not a sentence of it was his, but yet that it was an *adumbration* of one that he wrote upon the occasion. It may therefore be suspected, that some one who had heard him repeat the contents of the letter had given it to the public in the form in which it appeared.

What answer was returned to his friendly monition I know not, but it seems that it was succeeded by a letter[1] of greater length, written, as it afterwards appeared, too late to do any good, in which he expressed an opinion, that the person to whom it was addressed had forfeited her fame. The answer to this I have seen: it is written from Bath, and contains an indignant vindication as well of her conduct as her fame, an inhibition of Johnson from following her to Bath, and a farewell, concluding—"Till you have changed your opinion of [Piozzi] let us converse no more."

From the style of the letter, a conclusion was to be drawn that baffled all the powers of reasoning and persuasion:

> "One argument she summ'd up all in,
> The thing was done, and past recalling[2];"

which being the case, he contented himself with reflecting on what he had done to prevent that which he thought one of the greatest evils that could befal the progeny of his friend, the alienation of the affections of their mother. He looked upon the desertion of children by their parents, and the withdrawing

[1] [It appears as if Sir J. Hawkins, who had not had the advantage of seeing the correspondence published by Mrs. Piozzi, had made some confusion about these letters. It seems clear that the *first* of the series must have been, not Johnson's remonstrance, but *hers*, (*ante*, p. 249), dated *Bath, 30th June.* To that Johnson probably replied by the letter, the contents of which are *adumbrated* in that of the "*Gentleman's Magazine.*" To this she probably rejoined by the letter which Sir J. Hawkins says that he saw, to which Johnson's of the 8th July, given above, may have been the reply. Sir J. Hawkins thinks that *there* were *three* letters from Dr. Johnson, whereas it seems probable that there were but *two*, of which one only is preserved.—ED.]

[2] Pope and Swift's Miscellanies, "Phyllis, or the Progress of Love."—BOSWELL.

from them that protection, that mental nutriment, which, in their youth, they are capable of receiving, the exposing them to the snares and temptations of the world, and the solicitations and deceits of the artful and designing, as most unnatural; and in a letter on the subject to me, written from Ashbourn, thus delivered his sentiments: Hawk. p. 570.

"Poor Thrale! I thought that either her virtue or her vice," (meaning, as I understood, by the former, the love of her children, and by the latter her pride) "would have restrained her from such a marriage. She is now become a subject for her enemies to exult over, and for her friends, if she has any left, to forget or pity."]

It must be admitted that Johnson derived a considerable portion of happiness from the comforts and elegancies which he enjoyed in Mr. Thrale's family; but Mrs. Thrale assures us he was indebted for these to her husband alone, who certainly respected him sincerely. Her words are, "*Veneration for his virtue, reverence for his talents,* delight *in his conversation, and* habitual endurance of a yoke my husband first put upon me, *and of which he contentedly bore his share for sixteen or seventeen years, made me go on so long with* Mr. Johnson; *but the perpetual confinement I will own to have been* terrifying *in the first years of our friendship, and* irksome *in the last; nor could I pretend to* support *it without help, when my coadjutor was no more.*" Alas! how different is this from the declarations which I have heard Mrs. Thrale make in his lifetime, without a single murmur against any peculiarities, or against any one circumstance which attended their intimacy! Piozzi, Anec. p. 293.

As a sincere friend of the great man whose life I am writing, I think it necessary to guard my readers

against the mistaken notion of Dr. Johnson's character, which this lady's "Anecdotes" of him suggest; for from the very nature and form of her book, "it lends deception lighter wings to fly."

"Let it be remembered," says an eminent critick[1], "that she has comprised in a small volume all that she could recollect of Dr. Johnson in *twenty years*, during which period, doubtless, some severe things were said by him; and they who read the book in *two hours* naturally enough suppose that his whole conversation was of this complexion. But the fact is, I have been often in his company, and never *once* heard him say a severe thing to any one; and many others can attest the same. When he did say a severe thing, it was generally extorted by ignorance pretending to knowledge, or by extreme vanity or affectation.

"Two instances of inaccuracy," adds he, "are peculiarly worthy of notice:

Piozzi, Anec. p. 183. "It is said, '*that natural roughness of his manner so often mentioned would, notwithstanding the regularity of his notions, burst through them all from time to time; and he once bade a very celebrated lady, who praised him with too much zeal perhaps, or perhaps too strong an emphasis (which always offended him), consider what her flattery was worth before she choked him with it.*'

"Now let the genuine anecdote be contrasted with this.—The person thus represented as being harshly treated, though a very celebrated lady, was *then* just come to London from an obscure situation in the country. At Sir Joshua Reynolds's one evening, she

[1] Who has been pleased to furnish me with his remarks.—BOSWELL. [This "critic" is no doubt Mr. Malone, whose MS. notes on Mrs. Piozzi's "Anecdotes" contain the *germs* of these criticisms. Several of his similar animadversions have been already quoted, with the editor's reasons for differing essentially from Mr. Boswell and Mr. Malone in their estimate of Mrs. Piozzi's work. See *ante*, Vol. iv. p. 77, 378, 381, 386, *n.* Mr. Malone's notes were communicated to me by Mr. Markland, who purchased the volume at the sale of the library of the late James Boswell, junior, in 1825.—ED.]

met Dr. Johnson. She very soon began to pay her court to him in the most fulsome strain. 'Spare me, I beseech you,' dear madam,' was his reply.' She still *laid it on.* 'Pray, madam, let us have no more of this,' he rejoined. Not paying any attention to these warnings, she continued still her eulogy. At length, provoked by this indelicate and *vain* obtrusion of compliments, he exclaimed, 'Dearest lady, consider with yourself what your flattery is worth, before you bestow it so freely.'

"How different does this story appear[1], when accompanied with all those circumstances which really belong to it, but which Mrs. Thrale either did not know, or has suppressed!

"She says, in another place, '*One gentleman, however, who dined at a nobleman's house in his company, and that of* Mr. Thrale, *to whom I was obliged for the anecdote, was willing to enter the lists in defence of* King William's *character; and having opposed and contradicted* Johnson *two or three times, petulantly enough, the master of the house began to feel uneasy, and expect disagreeable consequences; to avoid which he said, loud enough for the doctor to hear, 'Our friend here has no meaning now in all this, except just to relate at club to-morrow how he teased* Johnson *at dinner to-day; this is all to do himself* honour.'—'*No, upon my word,' replied the other, 'I see no* honour *in it, whatever you may do.'—'Well, sir,' returned* Mr. Johnson, *sternly, 'if you do not see the honour, I am sure I* feel *the disgrace.*' Piozzi, Anec. p. 242.

"This is all sophisticated. Mr. Thrale was *not*

[1 The "critic" does not give any authority for *his* statement of the story; and when he himself applies the terms "*fulsome, vain, indelicate,* and *obtrusive*" to the lady's conduct, there seems no great reason (knowing, as we do, what things Johnson *did* on any slight provocation say even to ladies) to prefer Mr. Malone's version to Mrs. Piozzi's. See also *ante,* vol. iv. p. 152, in which it will be seen that both Boswell and Malone were well aware how much Johnson was displeased at Miss More's flattery.—ED.]

in the company, though he might have related the story to Mrs. Thrale. A friend, from whom I had the story, was present; and it was *not* at the house of a nobleman. On the observation being made by the master of the house on a gentleman's contradicting Johnson, that he had talked for the honour, &c. the gentleman muttered in a low voice, 'I see no honour in it;' and Dr. Johnson said nothing: so all the rest (though *bien trouvée*) is mere garnish[1]."

I have had occasion several times, in the course of this work, to point out the incorrectness of Mrs. Thrale as to particulars which consisted with my own knowledge. But indeed she has, in flippant terms enough, expressed her disapprobation of that anxious desire of authenticity which prompts a person who is to record conversations to write them down *at the moment*. Unquestionably, if they are to be recorded at all, the sooner it is done the better. This lady herself says, "*To recollect, however, and to repeat the sayings of* Dr. Johnson, *is almost all that can be done by the writers of his life; as his life, at least since my acquaintance with him, consisted in little else than talking, when he was not employed in some serious piece of work.*" She boasts of her having kept a common-place book; and we find she noted, at one time or other, in a very lively manner, specimens of the conversation of Dr. Johnson, and of those who talked with him: but had she done it recently, they probably would have been less erroneous, and we should have been relieved from those disagreeable doubts of their authenticity with which we must now pursue them.

Piozzi, Anec. p. 44.

Ibid. p. 23.

She says of him, "*He was the most charitable*

Ibid. p. 51.

[1] Upon this anecdote it is to be observed, that, again, as the "critic" does not mention *his* authority, so we should rather believe Mrs. Piozzi, who does give *hers*; and as she certainly had the substance of the story right, she is just as likely to have been accurate in the details as Mr. Malone, who had it, like herself, at second hand.—Ed.]

of mortals, without being what we call an active friend. *Admirable at giving counsel; no man saw his way so clearly; but he* would not stir a finger *for the assistance of those to whom he was willing enough to give advice*[1]." And again, on the same page, "*If you wanted a* slight favour, *you must apply to people of other dispositions; for* not a step would Johnson move *to obtain a man a vote in a society, to repay a compliment which might be useful or pleasing, to write a letter of request, &c., or to obtain a hundred pounds a year more for a friend who perhaps had already two or three. No force could urge him to diligence, no importunity could conquer his resolution to stand still.*"

It is amazing that one who had such opportunities of knowing Dr. Johnson should appear so little acquainted with his real character. I am sorry this lady does not advert, that she herself contradicts[2] the assertion of his being obstinately defective in the *petites morales*, in the little endearing charities of social life, in conferring smaller favours; for she says, "Dr. Johnson *was liberal enough in granting literary assistance to others, I think; and innumerable are the prefaces, sermons, lectures, and dedications which he used to make for people who begged of him.*" I am certain that a *more active friend* has rarely been found in any age. This work, which I fondly hope will rescue his memory from obloquy, contains a thousand instances of his benevolent exertions in almost every way that can be conceived; Piozzi, Anec. p. 193.

[1] *Ante*, vol. iv. p. 397.

[2] [Mrs. Piozzi may have been right or wrong as to the *degree* in which Dr. Johnson's indolence operated on those occasions; but at least she was sincere, for she did not conceal *from Johnson himself* that she thought him negligent in doing small favours: and Mr. Boswell's own work affords several instances in which Johnson exhibits and avows the contradictions in his character which are here imputed to Mrs. Piozzi as total misrepresentations. The truth seems to be that to all the little idle matters about which Mrs. Piozzi teased him, probably too often, he *was* very indifferent; and she describes him as she found him. —Ed.]

and particularly in employing his pen with a generous readiness for those to whom its aid could be useful. Indeed his obliging activity in doing little offices of kindness, both by letters and personal application, was one of the most remarkable features in his character; and for the truth of this I can appeal to a number of his respectable friends: Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Langton, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, Mr. Malone, the Bishop of Dromore, Sir William Scott, Sir Robert Chambers. And can Mrs. Thrale forget the advertisements which he wrote for her husband at the time of his election contest; the epitaphs on him and her mother; the playful and even trifling verses for the amusement of her and her daughters; his corresponding with her children; and entering into their minute concerns, which shows him in the most amiable light?

She relates, that Mr. Cholmondeley[1] unexpectedly rode up to Mr. Thrale's carriage, in which Mr. Thrale, and she, and Dr. Johnson were travelling; that he paid them all his proper compliments, but observing that Dr. Johnson, who was reading, did not see him, "*tapped him gently on the shoulder. 'Tis* Mr. Cholmondeley,' *says my husband. 'Well, sir—and what if it is* Mr. Cholmondeley?' *says the other, sternly, just lifting his eyes a moment from his book, and returning to it again with renewed avidity.*" This surely conveys a notion of Johnson, as if he had been grossly rude to Mr. Cholmondeley, a gentleman whom he always loved and esteemed. If, therefore, there was an absolute necessity for mentioning the story at all, it might have been thought that her tenderness for Dr. Johnson's character would

Piozzi, Anec. p. 258.

[1] George James Cholmondeley, Esq., grandson of George, third Earl of Cholmondeley, and one of the commissioners of excise; a gentleman respected for his abilities and elegance of manners.—BOSWELL. [He died in Feb. 1831, æt. 79, as this sheet was passing through the press. It is odd that the editor should have had the same remark to make as to Mr. Chamberlain Clark and Mr. Joddrell so nearly at the same time: *ante*, p. 160 and 170.—ED.]

have disposed her to state any thing that could soften it. Why then is there a total silence as to what Mr. Cholmondeley told her?—that Johnson, who had known him from his earliest years, having been made sensible of what had doubtless a strange appearance, took occasion, when he afterwards met him, to make a very courteous and kind apology. There is another little circumstance which I cannot but remark. Her book was published in 1785; she had then in her possession a letter from Dr. Johnson, dated in 1777, which begins thus: "Cholmondeley's story shocks me, if it be true, which I can hardly think, for I am utterly unconscious of it: I am very sorry, and very much ashamed." Why then publish the anecdote? Or if she did, why not add the circumstances, with which she was well acquainted[1]? Letters, vol. ii. p. 12.

In his social intercourse she thus describes him: Piozzi, Anec. p. 23.
"*Ever musing till he was called out to converse, and conversing till the fatigue of his friends, or the promptitude of his own temper to take offence, consigned him back again to silent meditation.*" Yet in the same book she tells us, "*He was, however, seldom inclined to be silent when any moral or literary question was started; and it was on such occasions that, like the sage in* 'Rasselas,' *he spoke, and attention watched his lips; he reasoned, and conviction closed his periods.*" His conversation, indeed, was so far from ever *fatiguing* his friends[2], that they regretted when Ibid. p. 302.

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 190. Let it be observed that here is no charge of falsehood or inaccuracy; the story is admitted to be true, but Mr. Boswell asks, "why did she not relate the apology which Johnson made to Mr. Cholmondeley?" It does not appear that she knew it: and finally Mr. Boswell inquires, "why publish so unfavourable an anecdote?" Why, it might be asked in return, has Mr. Boswell published fifty as unfavourable?—Ed.]

[2] [Mr. Boswell himself tells us that Johnson kept such late hours that he would frequently outsit all his company. Surely Mrs. Piozzi was justified in saying, in a colloquial style, that such a conversation had ended from "the fatigue of his friends." *Ante*, vol. iv. p. 56. There can be no doubt that after her deplorable marriage she lost much of her reverence and regard for Dr. Johnson, and many of her observations and expressions are tinged with vexation and anger; but they do not, in the editor's opinion, ever amount to any thing like a falsification of facts.—Ed.]

it was interrupted or ceased, and could exclaim in Milton's language,

"With thee conversing, I forget all time."

I certainly, then, do not claim too much in behalf of my illustrious friend in saying, that however smart and entertaining Mrs. Thrale's "Anecdotes" are, they must not be held as good evidence against him; for wherever an instance of harshness and severity is told, I beg leave to doubt its perfect authenticity; for though there may have been *some* foundation for it, yet, like that of his reproof to the "very celebrated lady," it may be so exhibited in the narration as to be very unlike the real fact.

The evident tendency of the following anecdote is to represent Dr. Johnson as extremely deficient in affection, tenderness, or even common civility. "*When I one day lamented the loss of a first cousin killed in* America,—'*Prithee, my dear (said he), have done with canting; how would the world be the worse for it, I may ask, if all your relations were at once spitted like larks, and roasted for* Presto's *supper*?'—Presto *was the dog that lay under the table while we talked.*" I suspect this too of exaggeration and distortion. I allow that he made her an angry speech; but let the circumstances fairly appear, as told by Mr. Baretti, who was present[1]:

Piozzi, Anec. p. 63.

"Mrs. Thrale, while supping very heartily upon larks, laid down her knife and fork, and abruptly exclaimed, 'O, my dear Johnson, do you know what has happened? The last letters from abroad have brought us an account that our poor cousin's head was taken off by a cannon-ball.' Johnson, who was

[1] [It must be recollected that Baretti's evidence is, in this case, worse than nothing, he having become a most brutal libeller of Mrs. Piozzi; but even if his version were the true one, Mr. Boswell should have seen that it made Dr. Johnson's illustration much more personally and pointedly offensive than as told by Mrs. Piozzi.—Ed.]

shocked both at the fact and her light unfeeling manner of mentioning it, replied, 'Madam, it would give *you* very little concern if all your relations were spitted like those larks, and dressed for Presto's supper[1].'"

It is with concern that I find myself obliged to animadvert on the inaccuracies of Mrs. Piozzi's "Anecdotes," and perhaps I may be thought to have dwelt too long upon her little collection. But as from Johnson's long residence under Mr. Thrale's roof, and his intimacy with her, the account which she has given of him may have made an unfavourable and unjust impression, my duty, as a faithful biographer, has obliged me reluctantly to perform this unpleasing task[2].

Having left the *pious negotiation*, as I called it, in the best hands, I shall here insert what relates to it. Johnson wrote to Sir Joshua Reynolds on July 6, as follows: "I am going, I hope, in a few days, to try the air of Derbyshire, but hope to see you before I go. Let me, however, mention to you what I have much at heart. If the chancellor should continue his attention to Mr. Boswell's request, and confer with you on the means of relieving my languid state, I am very desirous to avoid the appearance of asking

[1] Upon mentioning this to my friend Mr. Wilkes, he, with his usual readiness, pleasantly matched it with the following *sentimental anecdote*. He was invited by a young man of fashion at Paris to sup with him and a lady, who had been for some time his mistress, but with whom he was going to part. He said to Mr. Wilkes that he really felt very much for her, she was in such distress, and that he meant to make her a present of two hundred louis-d'ors. Mr. Wilkes observed the behaviour of mademoiselle, who sighed, indeed, very piteously, and assumed every pathetick air of grief, but eat no less than three French pigeons, which are as large as English partridges, besides other things. Mr. Wilkes whispered the gentleman, "We often say in England, *excessive sorrow is exceeding dry*, but I never heard *excessive sorrow is exceeding hungry*. Perhaps *one* hundred will do." The gentleman took the hint.—BOSWELL.

[2] [The editor's duty has obliged *him* to endeavour to remove the "unjust and unfavourable impressions" which Mr. Boswell has given of Mrs. Piozzi, but he is too well aware of the inevitable inaccuracy of all anecdotes—nay, even of those like Mr. Boswell's own, written down after short intervals—to give implicit confidence to Mrs. Piozzi's recollection; the chief claim of her Anecdotes to credit is, that they are confirmed in many instances by Dr. Johnson's correspondence, and in many more by Mr. Boswell's own work.—ED.]

money upon false pretences. I desire you to represent to his lordship, what, as soon as it is suggested, he will perceive to be reasonable,—that, if I grow much worse, I shall be afraid to leave my physicians, to suffer the inconveniences of travel, and pine in the solitude of a foreign country;—that, if I grow much better, of which indeed there is now little appearance, I shall not wish to leave my friends and my domestick comforts, for I do not travel for pleasure or curiosity; yet if I should recover, curiosity would revive. In my present state I am desirous to make a struggle for a little longer life, and hope to obtain some help from a softer climate. Do for me what you can." He wrote to me July 26: "I wish your affairs could have permitted a longer and continued exertion of your zeal and kindness. They that have your kindness may want your ardour. In the mean time I am very feeble and very dejected."

By a letter from Sir Joshua Reynolds I was informed, that the lord chancellor had called on him, and acquainted him that the application had not been successful; but that his lordship, after speaking highly in praise of Johnson, as a man who was an honour to his country, desired Sir Joshua to let him know, that on granting a mortgage of his pension [1], he should draw on his lordship to the amount of five or six hundred pounds, and that his lordship explained the meaning of the mortgage to be, that he wished the business to be conducted in such a manner, that Dr. Johnson should appear to be under the least possible obligation. Sir Joshua mentioned that he had by the same post communicated all this to Dr. Johnson.

[1] [This offer has in the first view of it the appearance rather of a commercial than a gratuitous transaction; but Sir Joshua clearly understood at the making it that Lord Thurlow designedly put it in that form. He was fearful that Johnson's high spirit would induce him to reject it as a donation, but thought that in the way of loan it might be accepted.—*Hawkins's Life*, p. 572.—ED.]

How Johnson was affected upon the occasion will appear from what he wrote to Sir Joshua Reynolds:

"Ashbourn, 9th September.

"Many words I hope are not necessary between you and me, to convince you what gratitude is excited in my heart by the chancellor's liberality, and your kind offices.

* * * * * * *

"I have enclosed a letter to the chancellor, which, when you have read it, you will be pleased to seal with a head, or any other general seal, and convey it to him: had I sent it directly to him, I should have seemed to overlook the favour of your intervention."

"TO THE LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR.[1]

"September, 1784.

"MY LORD,—After a long and not inattentive observation of mankind, the generosity of your lordship's offer raises in me not less wonder than gratitude. Bounty, so liberally bestowed, I should gladly receive, if my condition made it necessary; for, to such a mind, who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleased God to restore me to so great a measure of health, that if I should now appropriate so much of a fortune destined to do good, I could not escape from myself the charge of advancing a false claim. My journey to the continent, though I once thought it necessary, was never much encouraged by my physicians; and I was very desirous that your lordship should be told of it by Sir Joshua Reynolds as an event very uncertain; for if I grew much better, I should not be willing, if much worse, not able, to migrate. Your lordship was first solicited without my knowledge; but, when I was told that you were pleased to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refusal; yet, as I have had no long time to brood hope, and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been scarce a disappointment; and, from your lordship's kindness, I have received a benefit, which only men like you are able to bestow. I shall now live *mihi carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit. I am, my lord, your lordship's most obliged, most grateful, and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

[1] Sir Joshua Reynolds, on account of the excellence both of the sentiment and expression of this letter, took a copy of it, which he showed to some of his friends: one of whom [*Lady Lucan, it is said*], who admired it, being allowed to peruse it leisurely at home, a copy was made, and found its way into the newspapers and magazines. It was transcribed with some inaccuracies. I print it from the original draft in Johnson's own hand-writing.—BOSWELL.

Hawk. p. 572, 573.

[An incorrect copy of the above letter, though of a private nature, found its way into the public papers in this manner. It was given to Sir Joshua Reynolds, unsealed, to be delivered to Lord Thurlow. Sir Joshua, looking upon it as a handsome testimony of gratitude, and as it related to a transaction in which he had concerned himself, took a copy of it, and showed it to a few of his friends. Among these was a lady of quality, who, having heard it read, the next day desired to be gratified with the perusal of it at home: the use she made of this favour was, the copying and sending it to one of the newspapers, whence it was taken and inserted in others, as also in the *Gentleman's* and many other *magazines*. Johnson, upon being told that it was in print, exclaimed in my hearing—"I am betrayed;" but soon after forgot, as he was ever ready to do all real or supposed injuries, the error that made the publication possible.]

Upon this unexpected failure I abstain from presuming to make any remarks, or to offer any conjectures [1].

Ed.

[This affair soon became a topic of conversation, and it was stated that the cause of the failure was *the refusal of the king himself;* but from the following letter it appears that the *matter was never mentioned to his majesty;* that, as time pressed, his lordship proposed the beforementioned arrangement as from himself, running the risk of obtaining the king's subsequent approbation when he should have an opportunity of mentioning it to his majesty. This

[1] [It is rather singular that Mr. Boswell, who was so angry that Sir J. Hawkins did not inquire from Sir Joshua about the *beginning* of this negotiation, should himself have been so much more negligent as not to inquire about its *end*. If he had done so, Sir Joshua would no doubt have communicated to him Lord Thurlow's letter of the 18th Nov., and thus saved Mr. Boswell the pain which it is clear he felt at supposing that the *king himself* had rejected his lordship's humane proposition. It seems somewhat odd that Sir Joshua, after the appearance of the above passage in Mr. Boswell's first edition, did not explain the true state of the case to him. See the following note.—Ed.]

affords some, and yet not a satisfactory, explanation of the device suggested by Lord Thurlow of Johnson's giving him a *mortgage on his pension.*] Ed.

["LORD THURLOW TO SIR J. REYNOLDS. Reyn. MSS.

"Thursday, 18th November, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—My choice, if that had been left me, would certainly have been that the matter should not have been talked of at all. The only object I regarded was my own pleasure, in contributing to the health and comfort of a man whom I venerate sincerely and highly for every part, without exception, of his exalted character. This you know I proposed to do, as it might be without any expense, in all events at a rate infinitely below the satisfaction I proposed to myself. It would have suited the purpose better if nobody had heard of it, except Dr. Johnson, you, and J. Boswell[1]. *But the chief objection to the rumour is that his majesty is supposed to have refused it.* Had that been so, I should not have communicated the circumstance. It was impossible for me to take the king's pleasure on the suggestion I presumed to move. I am an untoward solicitor. The time seemed to press, and I chose rather to take on myself the risk of his majesty's concurrence than delay a journey which might conduce to Dr. Johnson's health and comfort.

"But these are all trifles, and scarce deserve even this cursory explanation. The only question of any worth is whether Dr. Johnson has any wish to go abroad, or other occasion for my assistance. Indeed he should give me credit for perfect simplicity, when I treat this as merely a pleasure afforded me, and accept it accordingly: any reluctance, if he examines himself thoroughly, will certainly be found to rest, in some part or other, upon a doubt of the disposition with which I offer it. I am, dear sir, with great regard, your most faithful and obedient servant,

"THURLOW."]

Having, after repeated reasonings, brought Dr. Johnson to agree to my removing to London, and even to furnish me with arguments in favour of what he had opposed; I wrote to him, requesting he would

[1] [That this letter was designedly kept from Mr. Boswell's knowledge is rendered probable by the following curious circumstance. On the face of the original letter *his name* has been obliterated with so much care that but for the different colour of the ink and some other small circumstances, it would not have been discoverable; it is artfully done, and appears to run "*except Dr. Johnson, you, and I*"—"*Boswell*" being erased.—ED.]

write them for me; he was so good as to comply, and I shall extract that part of his letter to me of June 11, as a proof how well he could exhibit a cautious yet encouraging view of it:

"I remember, and entreat you to remember, that *virtus est vitium fugere;* the first approach to riches is security from poverty. The condition upon which you have my consent to settle in London is, that your expense never exceeds your annual income. Fixing this basis of security, you cannot be hurt, and you may be very much advanced. The loss of your Scottish business, which is all that you can lose, is not to be reckoned as any equivalent to the hopes and possibilities that open here upon you. If you succeed, the question of prudence is at an end; every body will think that done right which ends happily; and though your expectations, of which I would not advise you to talk too much, should not be totally answered, you can hardly fail to get friends who will do for you all that your present situation allows you to hope; and if, after a few years, you should return to Scotland, you will return with a mind supplied by various conversation, and many opportunities of inquiry, with much knowledge, and materials for reflection and instruction."

Pemb. MSS.

["DR. JOHNSON TO DR. ADAMS.

"London, 11th June (July), 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I am going into Staffordshire and Derbyshire in quest of some relief, of which my need is not less than when I was treated at your house with so much tenderness.

"I have now received the Collations for Xenophon, which I have sent you with the letters that relate to them. I cannot at present take any part in the work, but I would rather pay for a Collation of Oppian than see it neglected; for the Frenchmen act with great liberality. Let us not fall below them.

"I know not in what state Dr. Edwards left his book[1]. Some of his emendations seemed to me to (be) irrefragably

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 234.—ED.]

certain, and such, therefore, as ought not to be lost. His rule was not (to) change the text; and, therefore, I suppose he has left notes to be subjoined. As the book is posthumous, some account of the editor ought to be given.

"You have now the whole process of the correspondence before you. When the Prior is answered, let some apology be made for me.

"I was forced to divide the Collation, but as it is paged you will easily put every part in its proper place.

"Be pleased to convey my respects to Mrs. and Miss Adams. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

Let us now contemplate Johnson thirty years after the death of his wife, still retaining for her all the tenderness of affection [1].

"TO THE REV. MR. BAGSHAW, AT BROMLEY [2].

"12th July, 1784.

"SIR,—Perhaps you may remember, that in the year 1753 you committed to the ground my dear wife. I now entreat your permission to lay a stone upon her; and have sent the inscription, that, if you find it proper, you may signify your allowance.

"You will do me a great favour by showing the place where she lies, that the stone may protect her remains.

"Mr. Ryland will wait on you for the inscription [3], and procure it to be engraved. You will easily believe that I shrink from this mournful office. When it is done, if I have strength remaining, I will visit Bromley once again, and pay you part of the respect to which you have a right from, reverend sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

On the same day he wrote to Mr. Langton:

"I cannot but think that in my languid and anxious state, I have some reason to complain that I receive from you neither inquiry nor consolation. You know how much I value your friendship, and with what confidence I expect your kindness, if I wanted any act of tenderness that you could perform; at least if you do not know it, I think your ignorance is your own fault.

[1] [If Sir J. Hawkins and Mrs. Piozzi sometimes took an unfavourable impression of Dr. Johnson's conduct, Mr. Boswell occasionally runs into the other extreme. Surely it is no such exemplary proof of "*tenderness of affection*" that he, for *thirty-one years*, had neglected one of the first offices not merely of affection, but of common regard, and seems to have been awakened at last to the melancholy recollection only by the near prospect of needing, himself, a similar memorial. Mr. Boswell's injudicious panegyric forces our thoughts into a contrary direction.—ED.]

[2] See vol. ii. p. 246.—BOSWELL. [3] Printed in his Works.—BOSWELL.

Yet how long is it that I have lived almost in your neighbourhood without the least notice?—I do not, however, consider this neglect as particularly shown to me; I hear two of your most valuable friends make the same complaint. But why are all thus overlooked? You are not oppressed by sickness, you are not distracted by business; if you are sick, you are sick of leisure:—And allow yourself to be told, that no disease is more to be dreaded or avoided. Rather to do nothing than to do good, is the lowest state of a degraded mind. Boileau says to his pupil,

> 'Que les vers ne soient pas votre eternel emploi,
> 'Cultivez vos amis.'——

That voluntary debility which modern language is content to term indolence will, if it is not counteracted by resolution, render in time the strongest faculties lifeless, and turn the flame to the smoke of virtue.—I do not expect or desire to see you; because I am much pleased to find that your mother stays so long with you, and I should think you neither elegant nor grateful, if you did not study her gratification. You will pay my respects to both the ladies, and to all the young people.—I am going northward for a while, to try what help the country can give me; but if you will write, the letter will come after me."

Next day he set out on a jaunt to Staffordshire and Derbyshire, flattering himself that he might be in some degree relieved.

During his absence from London he kept up a correspondence with several of his friends, from which I shall select what appears to me proper for publication, without attending nicely to chronological order.

"DR. JOHNSON TO DR. BROCKLESBY.

"Ashbourn, 20th July.

"The kind attention which you have so long shown to my health and happiness makes it as much a debt of gratitude as a call of interest to give you an account of what befalls me, when accident removes[1] me from your immediate care. The journey of the first day was performed with very little sense of fatigue; the second day brought me to Lichfield without much lassitude; but I am afraid that I could not have borne such violent agitation for many days together. Tell Dr. Heberden, that in the coach I read 'Ciceronianus,' which I concluded as I entered

[1] [This, by an error either of the transcript or the press, was printed *recovers*: Mr. Malone made the correction.—Ed.]

Lichfield. My affection and understanding went along with Erasmus, except that once or twice he somewhat unskilfully entangles Cicero's civil or moral with his rhetorical character.—I staid five days at Lichfield, but, being unable to walk, had no great pleasure, and yesterday (19th) I came hither, where I am to try what air and attention can perform.—Of any improvement in my health I cannot yet please myself with the perception. ******.—The asthma has no abatement. Opiates stop the fit, so as that I can sit and sometimes lie easy, but they do not now procure me the power of motion; and I am afraid that my general strength of body does not increase. The weather indeed is not benign; but how low is he sunk whose strength depends upon the weather! I am now looking into Floyer[1], who lived with his asthma to almost his ninetieth year. His book, by want of order, is obscure; and his asthma, I think, not of the same kind with mine. Something, however, I may perhaps learn.—My appetite still continues keen enough; and what I consider as a symptom of radical health, I have a voracious delight in raw summer fruit, of which I was less eager a few years ago.—You will be pleased to communicate this account to Dr. Heberden, and if any thing is to be done, let me have your joint opinion.—Now—*abite, curæ!*—let me inquire after the Club[2]."

"31st July.

"Not recollecting that Dr. Heberden might be at Windsor, I thought your letter long in coming. But, you know, *nocturna petuntur*; the letter which I so much desired tells me that I have lost one of my best and tenderest friends[3]. My comfort is, that he appeared to live like a man that had always before his eyes the fragility of our present existence, and was therefore, I hope, not unprepared to meet his Judge.—Your attention, dear sir, and that of Dr. Heberden, to my health, is extremely kind. I am loth to think that I grow worse; and cannot fairly prove even to my own partiality that I grow much better."

"5th August.

"I return you thanks, dear sir, for your unwearied attention both medicinal and friendly, and hope to prove the effect of your care by living to acknowledge it."

"12th August.

"Pray be so kind as to have me in your thoughts, and mention my case to others as you have opportunity. I seem to myself neither to gain nor lose strength. I have lately tried milk, but have yet found no advantage, and am afraid of it merely as

[1] [Sir John Floyer, M. D. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 60.—ED.]
[2] At the Essex Head, Essex-street.—BOSWELL.
[3] Mr. Allen, the printer.—BOSWELL.

a liquid. My appetite is still good, which I know is dear Dr. Heberden's criterion of the *vis vitæ*.—As we cannot now see each other, do not omit to write, for you cannot think with what warmth of expectation I reckon the hours of a post-day."

"14th August.

"I have hitherto sent you only melancholy letters; you will be glad to hear some better account. Yesterday the asthma remitted, perceptibly remitted, and I moved with more ease than I have enjoyed for many weeks. May God continue his mercy. This account I would not delay, because I am not a lover of complaints or complainers, and yet I have, since we parted, uttered nothing till now but terrour and sorrow. Write to me, dear sir."

"16th August.

"Better, I hope, and better. My respiration gets more and more ease and liberty. I went to church yesterday, after a very liberal dinner, without any inconvenience; it is indeed no long walk, but I never walked it without difficulty, since I came, before. * * * * * * the intention was only to overpower the seeming *vis inertiæ* of the pectoral and pulmonary muscles.—I am favoured with a degree of ease that very much delights me, and do not despair of another race up the stairs of the Academy.—If I were, however, of a humour to see, or to show, the state of my body, on the dark side, I might say,

'Quid te exempta juvat spinis de pluribus una?'

The nights are still sleepless, and the water rises, though it does not rise very fast. Let us, however, rejoice in all the good that we have. The remission of one disease will enable nature to combat the rest.—The squills I have not neglected; for I have taken more than a hundred drops a day, and one day took two hundred and fifty, which, according to the popular equivalent of a drop to a grain, is more than half an ounce. I thank you, dear sir, for your attention in ordering the medicines; your attention to me has never failed. If the virtue of medicines could be enforced by the benevolence of the prescriber, how soon should I be well!"

"19th August.

"The relaxation of the asthma still continues, yet I do not trust it wholly to itself, but soothe it now and then with an opiate. I not only perform the perpetual act of respiration with less labour, but I can walk with fewer intervals of rest, and with greater freedom of motion. I never thought well of Dr. James's compounded medicines; his ingredients appear to me sometimes inefficacious and trifling, and sometimes hetero-

geneous and destructive of each other. This prescription exhibits a composition of about three hundred and thirty grains, in which there are four grains of emetick tartar, and six drops [of] thebaic tincture. He that writes thus surely writes for show. The basis of his medicine is the gum ammoniacum, which dear Dr. Lawrence used to give, but of which I never saw any effect. We will, if you please, let this medicine alone. The squills have every suffrage, and in the squills we will rest for the present."

"21st August.

"The kindness which you show by having me in your thoughts upon all occasions will, I hope, always fill my heart with gratitude. Be pleased to return my thanks to Sir George Baker [1], for the consideration which he has bestowed upon me. Is this the balloon that has been so long expected, this balloon [2] to which I subscribed, but without payment? It is pity that philosophers have been disappointed, and shame that they have been cheated; but I know not well how to prevent either. Of this experiment I have read nothing; where was it exhibited? and who was the man that ran away with so much money? Continue, dear sir, to write often, and more at a time; for none of your prescriptions operate to their proper uses more certainly than your letters operate as cordials."

"26th August.

"I suffered you to escape last post without a letter, but you are not to expect such indulgence very often; for I write not so much because I have any thing to say, as because I hope for an answer; and the vacancy of my life here makes a letter of great value. I have here little company and little amusement, and, thus abandoned to the contemplation of my own miseries, I am something gloomy and depressed; this too I resist as I can, and find opium, I think, useful; but I seldom take more than one grain. Is not this strange weather? Winter absorbed the spring, and now autumn is come before we have had summer. But let not our kindness for each other imitate the inconstancy of the seasons."

"2d Sept.

"Mr. Windham has been here to see me: he came, I think,

[1] [The celebrated physician, created a baronet in 1776, died June 1809, ætat. 88.—Ed.]

[2] [Does Dr. Johnson here allude to the unsuccessful attempt made, in 1784, by De Moret, who was determined to anticipate Lunardi in his first experiment in England? "Moret attempted to inflate his balloon with rarified air, but by some accident in the process it sunk upon the fire, and the populace, who regarded the whole as an imposture, rushing in, completely destroyed the machine."—*Brayley's Londiniana*, vol. ii. 162, *note*.—J. H. Markland.]

forty miles out of his way, and staid about a day and a half; perhaps I make the time shorter than it was. Such conversation I shall not have again till I come back to the regions of literature; and there Windham is *inter stellas*[1] *Luna minores.*" —(He then mentions the effects of certain medicines, as taken; and adds) "Nature is recovering its original powers, and the functions returning to their proper state. God continue his mercies, and grant me to use them rightly."

"9th September.

"Do you know the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire? And have you ever seen Chatsworth? I was at Chatsworth on Monday: I had seen it before, but never when its owners were at home: I was very kindly received, and honestly pressed to stay; but I told them that a sick man is not a fit inmate of a great house. But I hope to go again some time."

"11th September.

"I think nothing grows worse, but all rather better, except sleep, and that of late has been at its old pranks. Last evening I felt what I had not known for a long time, an inclination to walk for amusement; I took a short walk, and came back again neither breathless nor fatigued. This has been a gloomy, frigid, ungenial summer; but of late it seems to mend: I hear the heat sometimes mentioned, but I do not feel it:

Juv. s. x. v. 217.

'Præterea minimus gelido jam in corpore sanguis
Febre calet solâ.'——

I hope, however, with good help, to find means of supporting a winter at home, and to hear and tell at the Club what is doing, and what ought to be doing, in the world. I have no company here, and shall naturally come home hungry for conversation. To wish you, dear sir, more leisure, would not be kind; but what leisure you have, you must bestow upon me."

"16th September.

"I have now let you alone for a long time, having indeed little to say. You charge me somewhat unjustly with luxury. At Chatsworth, you should remember that I have eaten but once; and the doctor, with whom I live, follows a milk diet. I grow no fatter, though my stomach, if it be not disturbed by physick, never fails me. I now grow weary of solitude, and think of removing next week to Lichfield, a place of more

[1] It is remarkable that so good a Latin scholar as Johnson should have been so inattentive to the metre, as by mistake to have written *stellas* instead of *ignes*. —Boswell.

society, but otherwise of less convenience. When I am settled, I shall write again. Of the hot weather that you mentioned, we have [not] had in Derbyshire very much; and for myself I seldom feel heat, and suppose that my frigidity is the effect of my distemper—a supposition which naturally leads me to hope that a hotter climate may be useful. But I hope to stand another English winter."

"Lichfield, 29th September.

"On one day I had three letters about the air-balloon[1]: yours was far the best, and has enabled me to impart to my friends in the country an idea of this species of amusement. In amusement, mere amusement, I am afraid it must end, for I do not find that its course can be directed so as that it should serve any purposes of communication; and it can give no new intelligence of the state of the air at different heights, till they have ascended above the height of mountains, which they seem never likely to do. I came hither on the 27th. How long I shall stay, I have not determined. My dropsy is gone, and my asthma much remitted, but I have felt myself a little declining these two days, or at least to-day; but such vicissitudes must be expected. One day may be worse than another; but this last month is far better than the former: if the next should be as much better than this, I shall run about the town on my own legs."

"6th October.

"The fate of the balloon I do not much lament: to make new balloons is to repeat the jest again. We now know a method of mounting into the air, and, I think, are not likely to know more. The vehicles can serve no use till we can guide them; and they can gratify no curiosity till we mount with them to greater heights than we can reach without; till we rise above the tops of the highest mountains, which we have yet not done. We know the state of the air in all its regions, to the top of Teneriffe, and therefore learn nothing from those who navigate a balloon below the clouds. The first experiment, however, was bold, and deserved applause and reward: but since it has been performed, and its event is known, I had rather now find a medicine that can ease an asthma."

[1] [Lunardi had ascended from the Artillery Ground on the 15th of this month, and as this was the first ascent in a balloon which had been witnessed in England, it is not surprising that very general interest was excited by the spectacle, and that so many allusions should be made to it by Johnson and his correspondents.—MARKLAND.]

"25th October.

"You write to me with a zeal that animates and a tenderness that melts me. I am not afraid either of a journey to London, or a residence in it. I came down with little fatigue, and am now not weaker. In the smoky atmosphere I was delivered from the dropsy, which I consider as the original and radical disease. The town is my element[1]: there are my friends, there are my books, to which I have not yet bid farewell, and there are my amusements. Sir Joshua told me long ago, that my vocation was to publick life; and I hope still to keep my station, till God shall bid me *Go in peace.*"

"TO MR. HOOLE.

"Ashbourne, 7th August.

"Since I was here, I have two little letters from you, and have not had the gratitude to write. But every man is most free with his best friends, because he does not suppose that they can suspect him of intentional incivility. One reason for my omission is, that being in a place to which you are wholly a stranger, I have no topicks of correspondence. If you had any knowledge of Ashbourne, I could tell you of two Ashbourne men, who, being last week condemned at Derby to be hanged for robbery, went and hanged themselves in their cell. But this, however it may supply us with talk, is nothing to you. Your kindness, I know, would make you glad to hear some good of me, but I have not much good to tell: if I grow not worse, it is all that I can say. I hope Mrs. Hoole receives more help from her migration. Make her my compliments, and write again to, dear sir, your affectionate servant."

"13th August.

"I thank you for your affectionate letter. I hope we shall both be the better for each other's friendship, and I hope we shall not very quickly be parted. Tell Mr. Nichols that I shall be glad of his correspondence when his business allows him a little remission; though to wish him less business, that I may have more pleasure, would be too selfish. To pay for seats at

[1] His love of London continually appears. In a letter from him to Mrs. Smart, wife of his friend the poet, which is published in a well-written life of him, prefixed to an edition of his poems, in 1791, there is the following sentence: "To one that has passed so many years in the pleasures and opulence of London, there are few places that can give much delight."

Once, upon reading that line in the curious epitaph quoted in "The Spectator,"

"Born in New-England, did in London die,"

he laughed and said, "I do not wonder at this. It would have been strange, if, born in London, he had died in New-England."—BOSWELL.

the balloon is not very necessary, because in less than a minute they who gaze at a mile's distance will see all that can be seen. About the wings, I am of your mind: they cannot at all assist it, nor I think regulate its motion. I am now grown somewhat easier in my body, but my mind is sometimes depressed. About the Club I am in no great pain. The forfeitures go on, and the house, I hear, is improved for our future meetings. I hope we shall meet often and sit long."

"4th September.

"Your letter was indeed long in coming, but it was very welcome. Our acquaintance has now subsisted long, and our recollection of each other involves a great space, and many little occurrences which melt the thoughts to tenderness. Write to me, therefore, as frequently as you can. I hear from Dr. Brocklesby and Mr. Ryland[1] that the Club is not crowded. I hope we shall enliven it when winter brings us together."

"TO DR. BURNEY.

"2nd August.

"The weather, you know, has not been balmy. I am now reduced to think, and am at least content to talk, of the weather. Pride must have a fall[2]. I have lost dear Mr. Allen; and wherever I turn, the dead or the dying meet my notice, and force my attention upon misery and mortality. Mrs. Burney's escape from so much danger, and her ease after so much pain, throws, however, some radiance of hope upon the gloomy prospect. May her recovery be perfect, and her continuance long! I struggle hard for life. I take physick and take air: my friend's chariot is always ready. We have run this morning twenty-four miles, and could run forty-eight more. *But who can run the race with death?*"

"4th September.

[Concerning a private transaction, in which his opinion was asked, and after giving it, he makes the following reflections,

[1] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 163, and vol. v. p. 143. Mr. Ryland died 24th July, 1798, æt. 81.—ED.]

[2] There was no information for which Dr. Johnson was less grateful than for that which concerned the weather. It was in allusion to his impatience with those who were reduced to keep conversation alive by observations on the weather, that he applied the old proverb to himself. If any one of his intimate acquaintance told him it was hot or cold, wet or dry, windy or calm, he would stop them by saying, "Poh! poh! you are telling us that of which none but men in a mine or a dungeon can be ignorant. Let us bear with patience, or enjoy in quiet, elementary changes, whether for the better or the worse, as they are never secrets."—BURNEY. [He says "pride must have a fall," in allusion to his own former assertions, that the weather had no effect on human health. See *Idler*, No. 11, and *ante*, vol. i. p. 318 and 453.—ED.]

which are applicable on other occasions.] "Nothing deserves more compassion than wrong conduct with good meaning; than loss or obloquy suffered by one who, as he is conscious only of good intentions, wonders why he loses that kindness which he wishes to preserve; and not knowing his own fault—if, as may sometimes happen, nobody will tell him—goes on to offend by his endeavours to please. I am delighted by finding that our opinions are the same. You will do me a real kindness by continuing to write. A post-day has now been long a day of recreation."

"1st November.

"Our correspondence paused for want of topicks. I had said what I had to say on the matter proposed to my consideration, and nothing remained but to tell you that I waked or slept, that I was more or less sick. I drew my thoughts in upon myself, and supposed yours employed upon your book. That your book has been delayed I am glad, since you have gained an opportunity of being more exact. Of the caution necessary in adjusting narratives there is no end. Some tell what they do not know, that they may not seem ignorant, and others from mere indifference about truth. All truth is not, indeed, of equal importance; but, if little violations are allowed, every violation will in time be thought little; and a writer should keep himself vigilantly on his guard against the first temptations to negligence or supineness. I had ceased to write, because respecting you I had no more to say, and respecting myself could say little good. I cannot boast of advancement, and in case of convalescence it may be said, with few exceptions, *Non progredi est regredi.* I hope I may be excepted. My great difficulty was with my sweet Fanny[1], who, by her artifice of inserting her letter in yours, had given me a precept of frugality which I was not at liberty to neglect; and I know not who were in town under whose cover I could send my letter. I rejoice to hear that you are so well, and have a delight particularly sympathetick in the recovery of Mrs. Burney."

"TO MR. LANGTON.

"25th August.

"The kindness of your last letter, and my omission to answer it, begins to give you, even in my opinion, a right to recriminate, and to charge me with forgetfulness for the absent. I will therefore delay no longer to give an account of myself, and wish I could relate what would please either myself or my

[1] The celebrated Miss Fanny Burney.—BOSWELL.

friend. On July 13 I left London, partly in hope of help from new air and change of place, and partly excited by the sick man's impatience of the present. I got to Lichfield in a stage vehicle, with very little fatigue, in two days, and had the consolation [1] to find that since my last visit my three old acquaintances are all dead. July 20 I went to Ashbourne, where I have been till now. The house in which we live is repairing. I live in too much solitude, and am often deeply dejected. I wish we were nearer, and rejoice in your removal to London. A friend at once cheerful and serious is a great acquisition. Let us not neglect one another for the little time which Providence allows us to hope. Of my health I cannot tell you, what my wishes persuaded me to expect, that it is much improved by the season or by remedies. I am sleepless; my legs grow weary with a very few steps, and the water breaks its boundaries in some degree. The asthma, however, has remitted: my breath is still much obstructed, but is more free than it was. Nights of watchfulness produce torpid days. I read very little, though I am alone; for I am tempted to supply in the day what I lost in bed. This is my history; like all other histories, a narrative of misery. Yet I am so much better than in the beginning of the year, that I ought to be ashamed of complaining. I now sit and write with very little sensibility of pain or weakness; but when I rise, I shall find my legs betraying me. Of the money which you mentioned I have no immediate need: keep it, however, for me, unless some exigence requires it. Your papers I will show you certainly when you would see them; but I am a little angry at you for not keeping minutes of your own *acceptum et expensum*, and think a little time might be spared from Aristophanes for the *res familiares*. Forgive me, for I mean well. I hope, dear sir, that you and Lady Rothes and all the young people, too many to enumerate, are well and happy. God bless you all."

"TO MR. WINDHAM.

"August.

"The tenderness with which you have been pleased to treat me through my long illness, neither health nor sickness can, I hope, make me forget; and you are not to suppose that after

[1] Probably some word has been here omitted before *consolation*—perhaps *sad* or *miserable*; or the word *consolation* has been printed by mistake, instead of *mortification*: but the original letter not being now [1793] in Mr. Langton's hands, the errour (if it be one) cannot be corrected.—MALONE.

we parted you were no longer in my mind. But what can a sick man say, but that he is sick? His thoughts are necessarily concentred in himself: he neither receives nor can give delight; his inquiries are after alleviations of pain, and his efforts are to catch some momentary comfort. Though I am now in the neighbourhood of the Peak, you must expect no account of its wonders, of its hills, its waters, its caverns, or its mines; but I will tell you, dear sir, what I hope you will not hear with less satisfaction, that, for about a week past, my asthma has been less afflictive."

"Lichfield, 2d October.

"I believe you had been long enough acquainted with the *phænomena* of sickness not to be surprised that a sick man wishes to be where he is not, and where it appears to every body but himself that he might easily be, without having the resolution to remove. I thought Ashbourn a solitary place, but did not come hither till last Monday. I have here more company, but my health has for this last week not advanced; and in the languor of disease how little can be done! Whither or when I shall make my next remove, I cannot tell; but I entreat you, dear sir, to let me know from time to time where you may be found, for your residence is a very powerful attractive to, sir, your most humble servant."

"TO MR. PERKINS.

"Lichfield, 4th October, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I cannot but flatter myself that your kindness for me will make you glad to know where I am, and in what state.

"I have been struggling very hard with my diseases. My breath has been very much obstructed, and the water has attempted to encroach upon me again. I passed the first part of the summer at Oxford, afterwards I went to Lichfield, thence to Ashbourn in Derbyshire, and a week ago I returned to Lichfield.

"My breath is now much easier, and the water is in a great measure run away, so that I hope to see you again before winter.

"Please make my compliments to Mrs. Perkins, and to Mr. and Mrs. Barclay. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM GERARD HAMILTON.

"Lichfield, 20th October, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Considering what reason you gave me in the spring to conclude that you took part in whatever good or evil might befal me, I ought not to have omitted so long the account which I am now about to give you. My diseases are an asthma and a dropsy, and, what is less curable, seventy-five. Of the dropsy, in the beginning of the summer, or in the spring, I recovered to a degree which struck with wonder both me and my physicians: the asthma now is likewise for a time very much relieved. I went to Oxford, where the asthma was very tyrannical, and the dropsy began again to threaten me; but seasonable physick stopped the inundation: I then returned to London, and in July took a resolution to visit Staffordshire and Derbyshire, where I am yet struggling with my disease. The dropsy made another attack, and was not easily ejected, but at last gave way. The asthma suddenly remitted in bed on the 13th of August, and though now very oppressive, is, I think, still something gentler than it was before the remission. My limbs are miserably debilitated, and my nights are sleepless and tedious. When you read this, dear sir, you are not sorry that I wrote no sooner. I will not prolong my complaints. I hope still to see you *in a happier hour*, to talk over what we have often talked, and perhaps to find new topicks of merriment, or new incitements to curiosity. I am, dear sir, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JOHN PARADISE, ESQ.[1]

"Lichfield, 27th October, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Though in all my summer's excursion I have given you no account of myself, I hope you think better of me than to imagine it possible for me to forget you, whose kindness to me has been too great and too constant not to have made its impression on a harder breast than mine. Silence is not very culpable, when nothing pleasing is suppressed. It would have alleviated none of your complaints to have read my vicissitudes of evil. I have struggled hard with very formidable and obstinate maladies; and though I cannot talk of health, think all praise due to my Creator and Preserver for

[1] Son of the late Peter Paradise, Esq. his Britannick majesty's consul at Salonica in Macedonia, by his lady, a native of that country. He studied at Oxford, and has been honoured by that university with the degree of LL. D. He is distinguished not only by his learning and talents, but by an amiable disposition, gentleness of manners, and a very general acquaintance with well-informed and accomplished persons of almost all nations.—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 34.—ED.]

the continuance of my life. The dropsy has made two attacks, and has given way to medicine; the asthma is very oppressive, but that has likewise once remitted. I am very weak and very sleepless; but it is time to conclude the tale of misery. I hope, dear sir, that you grow better, for you have likewise your share of human evil, and that your lady and the young charmers are well. I am, dear sir, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. GEORGE NICOL[1].

"Ashbourn, 19th August, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Since we parted, I have been much oppressed by my asthma, but it has lately been less laborious. When I sit I am almost at ease; and I can walk, though yet very little, with less difficulty for this week past than before. I hope I shall again enjoy my friends, and that you and I shall have a little more literary conversation. Where I now am, every thing is very liberally provided for me but conversation. My friend is sick himself, and the reciprocation of complaints and groans affords not much of either pleasure or instruction. What we have not at home this town does not supply; and I shall be glad of a little imported intelligence, and hope that you will bestow, now and then, a little time on the relief and entertainment of, sir, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. CRUIKSHANK.

"Ashbourn, 4th September, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Do not suppose that I forget you: I hope I shall never be accused of forgetting my benefactors. I had, till lately, nothing to write but complaints upon complaints of miseries upon miseries; but within this fortnight I have received great relief. Have your lectures any vacation? If you are released from the necessity of daily study, you may find time for a letter to me.—[In this letter he states the particulars of his case.]—In return for this account of my health, let me have a good account of yours, and of your prosperity in all your undertakings. I am, dear sir, yours, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. THOMAS DAVIES.

"14th August.

"The tenderness with which you always treat me makes me culpable in my own eyes for having omitted to write in so long a separation. I had, indeed, nothing to say that you could wish

[1] Bookseller to his majesty.—BOSWELL.

to hear. All has been hitherto misery accumulated upon misery, disease corroborating disease, till yesterday my asthma was perceptibly and unexpectedly mitigated. I am much comforted with this short relief, and am willing to flatter myself that it may continue and improve. I have at present such a degree of ease as not only may admit the comforts but the duties of life. Make my compliments to Mrs. Davies.—Poor dear Allen!—he was a good man."

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"Ashbourn, 21st July.

"The tenderness with which I am treated by my friends makes it reasonable to suppose that they are desirous to know the state of my health, and a desire so benevolent ought to be gratified.—I came to Lichfield in two days without any painful fatigue, and on Monday came hither, where I purpose to stay and try what air and regularity will effect. I cannot yet persuade myself that I have made much progress in recovery. My sleep is little, my breath is very much encumbered, and my legs are very weak. The water has increased a little, but has again run off. The most distressing symptom is want of sleep."

"19th August.

"Having had since our separation little to say that could please you or myself by saying, I have not been lavish of useless letters; but I flatter myself that you will partake of the pleasure with which I can now tell you that, about a week ago, I felt suddenly a sensible remission of my asthma, and consequently a greater lightness of action and motion.—Of this grateful alleviation I know not the cause, nor dare depend upon its continuance; but while it lasts I endeavour to enjoy it, and am desirous of communicating, while it lasts, my pleasure to my friends.—Hitherto, dear sir, I had written before the post, which stays in this town but a little while, brought me your letter. Mr. Davies seems to have represented my little tendency to recovery in terms too splendid. I am still restless, still weak, still watery, but the asthma is less oppressive.—Poor Ramsay[1]! On which side soever I turn, mortality presents its formidable frown. I left three old friends at Lichfield when I was last there, and now found them all dead. I no sooner lost sight of dear Allan, than I am told that I shall see him no more. That we must all die, we always knew: I wish I had sooner remembered it. Do not think me intrusive or importunate, if I now call, dear sir, on you to remember it."

[1] Allan Ramsay, Esq. painter to his majesty, who died August 10, 1784, in the seventy-first year of his age, much regretted by his friends.—BOSWELL.

"2d September.

"I am glad that a little favour from the court has intercepted your furious purposes[1]. I could not in any case have approved such publick violence of resentment, and should have considered any who encouraged it as rather seeking sport for themselves than honour for you. Resentment gratifies him who intended an injury, and pains him unjustly who did not intend it. But all this is now superfluous.—I still continue, by God's mercy, to mend. My breath is easier, my nights are quieter, and my legs are less in bulk and stronger in use. I have, however, yet a great deal to overcome before I can yet attain even an old man's health.—Write, do write to me now and then. We are now old acquaintance, and perhaps few people have lived so much and so long together with less cause of complaint on either side. The retrospection of this is very pleasant, and I hope we shall never think on each other with less kindness."

"9th September.

"I could not answer your letter before this day, because I went on the sixth to Chatsworth, and did not come back till the post was gone. Many words, I hope, are not necessary between you and me to convince you what gratitude is excited in my heart by the chancellor's liberality and your kind offices. I did not indeed expect that what was asked by the chancellor would have been refused[2]; but since it has, we will not tell that any thing has been asked.—I have enclosed a letter to the chancellor, which, when you have read it, you will be pleased to seal with a head or other general seal, and convey it to him. Had I sent it directly to him, I should have seemed to overlook the favour of your intervention.—My last letter told you of my advance in health, which, I think, in the whole still continues. Of the hydropick tumour there is now very little appearance: the asthma is much less troublesome, and seems to remit something day after day. I do not despair of supporting an English winter.—At Chatsworth, I met young Mr. Burke, who led me very commodiously into conversation with the duke and duchess. We had a very good morning. The dinner was publick."

[1] [This no doubt refers to the squabbles in the Academy, and an intention of Sir Joshua to resign the chair; a purpose, however, which he executed in Feb. 1790, but he resumed it again within a month.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 261, *et seq.* There is some obscurity in this matter. It appears that Sir Joshua understood Lord Thurlow in his *verbal* communication (*ante*, p. 262) to have represented his request as *rejected*, though in the *letter* of the 18th November he says the contrary. Perhaps the solution may be, that Lord Thurlow happened at the moment to be, as he often was, on bad terms with Mr. Pitt, in whose special department the increase of a pension would be, and that he did not like to speak to him on the subject.—Ed.]

"18th September.

"I flattered myself that this week would have given me a letter from you, but none has come. Write to me now and then, but direct your next to Lichfield.—I think, and I hope am sure, that I still grow better. I have sometimes good nights, but am still in my legs weak, but so much mended, that I go to Lichfield in hope of being able to pay my visits on foot, for there are no coaches.—I have three letters this day, all about the balloon: I could have been content with one. Do not write about the balloon, whatever else you may think proper to say."

"2d October.

"I am always proud of your approbation, and therefore was much pleased that you liked my letter. When you copied it, you invaded the chancellor's right rather than mine.—The refusal I did not expect, but I had never thought much about it, for I doubted whether the chancellor had so much tenderness for me as to ask. He, being keeper of the king's conscience, ought not to be supposed capable of an improper petition.—All is not gold that glitters, as we have often been told; and the adage is verified in your place and my favour; but if what happens does not make us richer, we must bid it welcome if it makes us wiser.—I do not at present grow better, nor much worse. My hopes, however, are somewhat abated, and a very great loss is the loss of hope; but I struggle on as I can."

"TO MR. JOHN NICHOLS[1].

"Lichfield, 20th October.

"When you were here, you were pleased, as I am told, to think my absence an inconvenience. I should certainly have been very glad to give so skilful a lover of antiquities any information about my native place, of which, however, I know not much, and have reason to believe that not much is known.—Though I have not given you any amusement, I have received amusement from you. At Ashbourn, where I had very little company, I had the luck to borrow 'Mr. Bowyer's Life;' a book so full of contemporary history, that a literary man must find some of his old friends. I thought that I could, now and

[1] [This very respectable man, who contributed so largely to the literary and topographical history of his country, died in 1826, at the advanced age of eighty-two. "His long life," as his friend and biographer, Mr. Alexander Chalmers, has truly observed, "was spent in the promotion of useful knowledge." The Life of Bowyer, to which Johnson refers, was republished in 1812-15, with large additions, in nine vols. 8vo., under the title of "Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century." It is a storehouse of facts and dates, and every man interested in literary biography must own the vast obligations which are due to its indefatigable compiler.—MARKLAND.]

then, have told you some hints worth your notice; and perhaps we may talk a life over. I hope we shall be much together: you must now be to me what you were before, and what dear Mr. Allen was besides. He was taken unexpectedly away, but I think he was a very good man.—I have made little progress in recovery. I am very weak and very sleepless; but I live on and hope."

This various mass of correspondence, which I have thus brought together[1], is valuable, both as an addition to the store which the publick already has of Johnson's writings, and as exhibiting a genuine and noble specimen of vigour and vivacity of mind, which neither age nor sickness could impair or diminish[2].

It may be observed, that his writing in every way, whether for the publick, or privately to his friends, was by fits and starts; for we see frequently that many letters are written on the same day. When he had once overcome his aversion to begin, he was, I suppose, desirous to go on, in order to relieve his mind from the uneasy reflection of delaying what he ought to do.

While in the country, notwithstanding the accumulation of illness which he endured, his mind did not lose its powers. He translated an ode of Horace[3], which is printed in his works, and composed several prayers. I shall insert one of them, which is so wise and energetick, so philosophical and so pious, that I doubt not of its affording consolation to many a sincere Christian when in a state of mind to which I believe the best are sometimes liable.

[1] [This is the Editor's example and excuse for having brought together in a similar manner the extracts from Mrs. Thrale's correspondence.—ED.]

[2] [Mr. Boswell carries his panegyric a little too far; Johnson himself has assigned reasons *why* his letters at this period should *not* exhibit "vigour and vivacity of mind." He tells Mr. Nicol that every thing was liberally provided for him at Ashbourne but *conversation*; and, from his letter to Dr. Burney (p. 275), he appears to have been reduced to talk about the weather and other common-place topics. The want of society, and the fact that Johnson was then "struggling with disease," will account for his correspondence turning so exclusively upon himself and his own complaints.—MARKLAND.]

[3] [Book iv. ode vii.—*Diffugere nives.*—ED.]

"AGAINST INQUISITIVE AND PERPLEXING THOUGHTS.

"O Lord, my maker and protector, who hast graciously sent me into this world to work out my salvation, enable me to drive from me all such unquiet and perplexing thoughts as may mislead or hinder me in the practice of those duties which thou hast required. When I behold the works of thy hands, and consider the course of thy providence, give me grace always to remember that thy thoughts are not my thoughts, nor thy ways my ways. And while it shall please thee to continue me in this world, where much is to be done and little to be known, teach me, by thy Holy Spirit, to withdraw my mind from unprofitable and dangerous inquiries, from difficulties vainly curious, and doubts impossible to be solved. Let me rejoice in the light which thou hast imparted, let me serve thee with active zeal and humble confidence, and wait with patient expectation for the time in which the soul which thou receivest shall be satisfied with knowledge. Grant this, O Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

And here I am enabled fully to refute a very unjust reflection, by Sir John Hawkins, both against Dr. Johnson and his faithful servant Mr. Francis Barber; as if both of them had been guilty of culpable neglect towards a person of the name of Heely, whom Sir John chooses to call a *relation* of Dr. Johnson's. The fact is, that Mr. Heely was not his relation: he had indeed been married to one of his cousins, but she had died without having children, and he had married another woman; so that even the slight connexion which there once had been by *alliance* was dissolved. Dr. Johnson, who had shown very great liberality to this man while his first wife was alive, as has appeared in a former part of this work[1], was humane and charitable enough to continue his bounty to him occasionally; but surely there was no strong call of duty upon him or upon his legatee to do more. The following letter, obligingly communicated to me by Mr. Andrew Strahan, will confirm what I have stated:

[1] *Ante*, vol. ii. p. 31.—BOSWELL.

"TO MR. HEELY, NO. 5, IN PYE-STREET, WESTMINSTER.

"Ashbourn, 12th August, 1784.

"SIR,—As necessity obliges you to call so soon again upon me, you should at least have told the smallest sum that will supply your present want: you cannot suppose that I have much to spare. Two guineas is as much as you ought to be behind with your creditor.—If you wait on Mr. Strahan, in New-street, Fetter-lane, or, in his absence, on Mr. Andrew Strahan, show this, by which they are entreated to advance you two guineas, and to keep this as a voucher. I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Indeed it is very necessary to keep in mind that Sir John Hawkins has unaccountably viewed Johnson's character and conduct in almost every particular with an unhappy prejudice [1].

I shall add one instance only to those which I have thought it incumbent on me to point out. Talking of Mr. Garrick's having signified his willingness to let Johnson have the loan of any of his books to assist him in his edition of Shakspeare, Sir John says (p. 444), "Mr. Garrick knew not what risk he ran by this offer. Johnson had so strange a forgetfulness of obligations of this sort, that few who lent him books ever saw them again." This surely conveys a most unfavourable insinuation, and has been so understood [2]. Sir John mentions the single case of a curious edition of Politian, which he tells us appeared to belong to Pembroke College, which probably had been considered by Johnson as his own for upwards of fifty years. Would it not be fairer to consider this as an inadvertence, and draw no

[1] [This seems but too true. Miss Hawkins confesses it in the matter of the Essex-street Club. In the case of Heely it is still more flagrant, and without any justification. We shall see presently, that in the last scene of Johnson's life a transaction took place (see *sub* 7th Dec. 1784) which may have had the effect of souring the feeling of Sir John towards his old friend and his servant Barber. It must, however, be recollected, that Mr. Boswell was very angry that Hawkins had anticipated him as Johnson's biographer, and was by that feeling betrayed into a great deal of injustice towards him.—ED.]

[2] [This surely is over-stated. There are many proofs that Johnson was slovenly in such matters, but no one ever thought it an imputation of so grave a nature as Mr. Boswell here chooses to represent it.—ED.]

general inference? The truth is, that Johnson was so attentive, that in one of his manuscripts in my possession he has marked in two columns books borrowed and books lent.

In Sir John Hawkins's compilation there are, however, some passages concerning Johnson which have unquestionable merit. One of them I shall transcribe, in justice to a writer whom I have had too much occasion to censure, and to show my fairness as the biographer of my illustrious friend: "There was wanting in his conduct and behaviour that dignity which results from a regular and orderly course of action, and by an irresistible power commands esteem. He could not be said to be a staid man, nor so to have adjusted in his mind the balance of reason and passion, as to give occasion to say what may be observed of some men, that all they do is just, fit, and right." Yet a judicious friend well suggests, "It might, however, have been added, that such men are often merely just, and rigidly correct, while their hearts are cold and unfeeling; and that Johnson's virtues were of a much higher tone than those of the *staid, orderly man* here described."

We now behold Johnson for the last time in his native city, for which he ever retained a warm affection, and which by a sudden apostrophe, under the word *Lich*, he introduces with reverence into his immortal work, "The English Dictionary:"—"*Salve magna parens*[1]!" While here, he felt a revival of

[1] The following circumstance, mutually to the honour of Johnson and the corporation of his native city, has been communicated to me by the Rev. Dr. Vyse from the town-clerk: "Mr. Simpson has now before him a record of the respect and veneration which the corporation of Lichfield, in the year 1767, had for the merits and learning of Dr. Johnson. His father built the corner house in the market-place, the two fronts of which, towards Market and Broad-market Street, stood upon waste land of the corporation, under a forty years' lease, which was then expired. On the 15th of August, 1767, at a common-hall of the bailiffs and citizens, it was ordered (and that without any solicitation), that a lease should be granted to Samuel Johnson, Doctor of Laws, of the encroachments at his house, for the term of ninety-nine years, at the old rent, which was five shillings: of which, as town-clerk, Mr. Simpson had the

all the tenderness of filial affection, an instance of which appeared in his ordering the grave-stone and inscription over Elizabeth Blaney[1] to be substantially and carefully renewed.

To Mr. Henry White[2], a young clergyman, with whom he now formed an intimacy, so as to talk to him with great freedom, he mentioned that he could not in general accuse himself of having been an undutiful son. "Once, indeed," said he, "I was disobedient: I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter market. Pride was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago I desired to atone for this fault. I went to Uttoxeter in very bad weather, and stood for a considerable time bare-headed in the rain, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory[3]."

honour and pleasure of informing him, and that he was desired to accept it without paying any fine on the occasion; which lease was afterwards granted, and the doctor died possessed of this property."—BOSWELL.

[1] See vol. i. p. 8.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Sacrist and one of the vicars of Eichfield Cathedral, 1831.—MARKLAND.]

[3] [The following account of this affair was communicated in MS. to the Editor, but he finds it is a transcript from Mr. Warner's "Tour through the Northern Counties of England," published in 1802, and has been quoted by Mr. Chalmers in his edition:—"During the last visit which the doctor made to Lichfield, the friends with whom he was staying missed him one morning at the breakfast-table. On inquiring after him of the servants, they understood he had set off from Lichfield at a very early hour, without mentioning to any of the family whither he was going. The day passed without the return of the illustrious guest, and the party began to be very uneasy on his account, when, just before the supper-hour, the door opened, and the doctor stalked into the room. A solemn silence of a few minutes ensued, nobody daring to inquire the cause of his absence, which was at length relieved by Johnson addressing the lady of the house in the following manner: 'Madam, I beg your pardon for the abruptness of my departure from your house this morning, but I was constrained to it by my conscience. Fifty years ago, madam, on this day, I committed a breach of filial piety, which has ever since lain heavy on my mind, and has not till this day been expiated. My father, you recollect, was a bookseller, and had long been in the habit of attending ——— market, and opening a stall for the sale of his books during that day. Confined to his bed by indisposition, he requested me, this time fifty years ago, to visit the market, and attend the stall in his place. But, madam, my pride prevented me from doing my duty, and I gave my father a refusal. To do away the sin of this disobedience, I this day went in a post-chaise to ——, and going into the market at the time of high business, uncovered my head, and stood with it bare an hour before the stall which my father had formerly used, exposed to the sneers of the standers-by and the inclemency of the weather; a penance by which I trust I have propitiated Heaven for this only instance, I believe, of contumacy toward my father.'"—ED.]

"I told him," says Miss Seward, "in one of my latest visits to him, of a wonderful learned pig which I had seen at Nottingham; and which did all that we have observed exhibited by dogs and horses. The subject amused him. 'Then,' said he, 'the pigs are a race unjustly calumniated. *Pig* has, it seems, not been wanting to *man*, but *man* to *pig*. We do not allow *time* for his education; we kill him at a year old.' Mr. Henry White, who was present, observed that if this instance had happened in or before Pope's time, he would not have been justified in instancing the swine as the lowest degree of grovelling instinct. Dr. Johnson seemed pleased with the observation, while the person who made it proceeded to remark, that great torture must have been employed, ere the indocility of the animal could have been subdued.—'Certainly,' said the Doctor; 'but,' turning to me, 'how old is your pig?' I told him, three years old. 'Then,' said he, 'the pig has no cause to complain; he would have been killed the first year if he had not been *educated*, and protracted existence is a good recompense for very considerable degrees of torture.'"

["TO DR. HEBERDEN, LONDON[1]. MS.

"Lichfield, 13th October, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—Though I doubt not but Dr. Brocklesby would communicate to you any incident in the variation of my health which appeared either curious or important, yet I think it time to give you some account of myself.

"Not long after the first great efflux of the water, I attained so much vigour of limbs and freedom of breath, that without rest or intermission, I went with Dr. Brocklesby to the top of the painter's Academy. This was the greatest degree of health that I have obtained, and this, if it could continue, were per-

[1] [Communicated to the editor by Dr. Heberden, junior, through their common friend, Mr. Edward Hawke Locker.—ED.] ["Dr. Johnson being asked in his last illness what physician he had sent for—'Dr. Heberden,' replied he, '*ultimus Romanorum*—the last of our learned physicians.'"—*Nichols's Anec.* vol. vi. 598.—MARKLAND.]

MS. haps sufficient; but my breath soon failed, and my body grew weak.

"At Oxford (in June) I was much distressed by shortness of breath, so much that I never attempted to scale the Library: the water gained upon me, but by the use of squills was in a great measure driven away.

"In July I went to Lichfield, and performed the journey with very little fatigue in the common vehicle, but found no help from my native air. I then removed to Ashbourne, in Derbyshire, where for some time I was oppressed very heavily by the asthma; and the dropsy had advanced so far, that I could not without great difficulty button me at my knees.

(Here are omitted some minute medical details.)

"No hydropical humour has been lately visible. The relaxation of my breath has not continued as it was at first, but neither do I breathe with the same *angustiæ* and distress as before the remission. The summary of my state is this:

"I am deprived, by weakness and the asthma, of the power of walking beyond a very short space.

"I draw my breath with difficulty upon the least effort, but not with suffocation or pain.

"The dropsy still threatens, but gives way to medicine.

"The summer has passed without giving me any strength.

"My appetite is, I think, less keen than it was, but not so abated as that its decline can be observed by any but myself.

"Be pleased to think on me sometimes. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

ED. [From Lichfield he also wrote several letters to Sir J. Hawkins, in a tone which announced serious danger. The concluding paragraph of the last of them was as follows:

"7th November, 1784.

Hawk. p. 576. "I am relapsing into the dropsy very fast, and shall make such haste to town that it will be useless to write to me; but when I come, let me have the benefit of your advice, and the consolation of your company."]

As Johnson had now very faint hopes of recovery, and as Mrs. Thrale was no longer devoted to him, it

might have been supposed[1] that he would naturally have chosen to remain in the comfortable house of his beloved wife's daughter, and end his life where he began it. But there was in him an animated and lofty spirit[2], and however complicated diseases might depress ordinary mortals, all who saw him beheld and acknowledged the *invictum animum Catonis*[3]. Such was his intellectual ardour even at this time, that he said to one friend, "Sir, I look upon every day to be lost in which I do not make a new acquaintance;" and to another, when talking of his illness, "I will be conquered; I will not capitulate." And such was his love of London, so high a relish had he of its magnificent extent and variety of intellectual entertainment, that he languished when absent from it, his mind having become quite luxurious from the long habit of enjoying the metropolis; and, therefore, although at Lichfield, surrounded with friends who loved and revered him, and for whom he had a very sincere affection, he still found that such conversation as London affords could be found nowhere else. These feelings, joined probably to some flattering hopes of aid from the eminent physicians and surgeons in London, who kindly and generously attended him without accepting fees, made him resolve to return to the capital.

[1] [Why? Miss Porter respected Dr. Johnson, but could have felt for him nothing like filial devotion. She was nearly as old, almost as infirm, and more helpless than Johnson, and it is scarcely possible to imagine any arrangement less "*natural*" or less likely to be agreeable to either of the parties, and especially to Dr. Johnson, than that *partnership in disease* which Mr. Boswell suggests. —Ed.]

[2] Mr. Burke suggested to me, as applicable to Johnson, what Cicero, in his "Cato Major," says of Appius: "Intentum enim animum, tanquam arcum, habebat, nec languescens succumbebat senectuti;" repeating, at the same time, the following noble words in the same passage: "Ita enim senectus honesta est, si seipsa defendit, si jus suum retinet, si nemini emancipata est, si usque ad extremum vitæ spiritum vindicet jus suum."—Boswell.

[3] *Atrocem* animum Catonis are Horace's words, and it may be doubted whether *atrox* is used by any other original writer in the same sense. *Stubborn* is perhaps the most correct translation of this epithet.—Malone.

From Lichfield he came to Birmingham, where he passed a few days with his worthy old school-fellow, Mr. Hector, who thus writes to me: "He was very solicitous with me to recollect some of our most early transactions, and transmit them to him, for I perceived nothing gave him greater pleasure than calling to mind those days of our innocence. I complied with his request, and he only received them a few days before his death. I have transcribed for your inspection exactly the minutes I wrote to him." This paper having been found in his repositories after his death, Sir John Hawkins has inserted it entire, and I have made occasional use of it and other communications from Mr. Hector[1] in the course of this work. I have both visited and corresponded with him since Dr. Johnson's death, and by my inquiries concerning a great variety of particulars have obtained additional information. I followed the same mode with the Reverend Dr. Taylor, in whose presence I wrote down a good deal of what he could tell; and he, at my request, signed his name, to give it authenticity. It is very rare to find any person who is able to give a distinct account of the life even of one whom he has known intimately, without questions being put to them. My friend Dr. Kippis has told me, that on this account it is a practice with him to draw out a biographical catechism.

Johnson then proceeded to Oxford, where he was

[1] It is a most agreeable circumstance attending the publication of this work, that Mr. Hector has survived his illustrious school-fellow so many years; that he still retains his health and spirits; and has gratified me with the following acknowledgment: "I thank you, most sincerely thank you, for the great and long-continued entertainment your Life of Dr. Johnson has afforded me, and others of my particular friends." Mr. Hector, besides setting me right as to the verses on a Sprig of Myrtle, (see vol. i. p. 62, note) has favoured me with two English odes, written by Dr. Johnson at an early period of his life, which will appear in my edition of his poems.—BOSWELL. This early and worthy friend of Johnson died at Birmingham, 2d September, 1794.—MALONE.

again kindly received by Dr. Adams[1], who was pleased to give me the following account in one of his letters, (Feb. 17th, 1785): "His last visit was, I believe, to my house, which he left, after a stay of four or five days. We had much serious talk together, for which I ought to be the better as long as I live. You will remember some discourse which we had in the summer upon the subject of prayer, and the difficulty of this sort of composition. He reminded me of this, and of my having wished him to try his hand, and to give us a specimen of the style and manner that he approved. He added that he was now in a right frame of mind, and as he could not possibly employ his time better, he would in earnest set about it. But I find upon inquiry, that no papers of this sort were left behind him, except a few short ejaculatory forms suitable to his present situation."

Dr. Adams had not then received accurate information on this subject: for [in the interval between these two visits to Oxford, and indeed, within a very few days of the last, Dr. Johnson appears to have put to paper some preparatory notes on this subject. In Mr. Anderdon's MSS. is the following paper: ED.

[1] This amiable and excellent man survived Dr. Johnson about four years, having died in January, 1789, at Gloucester, where a monument is erected to his memory with the following inscription:—

Sacred to the memory of WILLIAM ADAMS, D. D. Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, Prebendary of this Cathedral, and Archdeacon of Llandaff. Ingenious, learned, eloquent, he ably defended the truth of Christianity; pious, benevolent, and charitable, he successfully inculcated its sacred precepts. Pure, and undeviating in his own conduct, he was tender and compassionate to the failings of others. Ever anxious for the welfare and happiness of mankind, he was on all occasions forward to encourage works of public utility and extensive beneficence. In the government of the college over which he presided, his vigilant attention was uniformly exerted to promote the important objects of the institution: whilst the mild dignity of his deportment, his gentleness of disposition and urbanity of manners, inspired esteem, gratitude, and affection. Full of days, and matured in virtue, he died Jan. 13th, 1786, aged 82.

A very just character of Dr. Adams may also be found in "The Gentleman's Magazine" for 1789, vol. lix. p. 214.—MALONE.

And. MSS.

"PRECES

" —— Against the incursion of evil thoughts.
" —— Repentance and pardon—*Laud.*
" —— In disease.
" —— On the loss of friends—by death; by his own fault or friend's.
" —— On the unexpected notice of the death of others.

" Prayer generally recommendatory;
" To understand their prayers;
" Under dread of death;
" Prayer commonly considered as a stated and temporary duty—performed and forgotten—without any effect on the following day.
" Prayer—a vow.—*Taylor.*

" SCEPTICISM CAUSED BY

" 1. Indifference about opinions.
" 2. Supposition that things disputed are disputable.
" 3. Demand of unsuitable evidence.
" 4. False judgment of evidence.
" 5. Complaint of the obscurity of Scripture.
" 6. Contempt of fathers and of authority.
" 7. Absurd method of learning objections first.
" 8. Study not for truth, but vanity.
" 9. Sensuality and a vicious life.
" 10. False honour, false shame.
" 11. Omission of prayer and religious exercises.—*Oct.* 31, 1784."

ED. The first part of these notes seems to be a classification of prayers; the two latter, hints for the *discourse* on prayer which he intended to prefix.]

It has since appeared that various prayers had been composed by him at different periods, which, intermingled with pious resolutions and some short notes of his life, were entitled by him "Prayers and Meditations," and have, in pursuance of his earnest requisition, in the hopes of doing good, been published, with a judicious well-written preface, by the Reverend Mr. Strahan, to whom he delivered them. This admirable collection, to which I have frequently

referred in the course of this work, evinces, beyond all his compositions for the publick, and all the eulogies of his friends and admirers, the sincere virtue and piety of Johnson. It proves with unquestionable authenticity that, amidst all his constitutional infirmities, his earnestness to conform his practice to the precepts of christianity was unceasing, and that he habitually endeavoured to refer every transaction of his life to the will of the Supreme Being [1].

He arrived in London on the 16th of November, and next day sent to Dr. Burney the following note, which I insert as the last token of his remembrance of that ingenious and amiable man, and as another of the many proofs ofthe tenderness and benignity of his heart:

"Dr. Johnson, who came home last night, sends his respects to dear Dr. Burney and all the dear Burneys, little and great."

"TO MR. HECTOR, IN BIRMINGHAM.

"London, 17th Nov. 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I did not reach Oxford until Friday morning and then I sent Francis to see the balloon fly, but could not go

[1] [There are some errors in the foregoing statement relative to the *Prayers and Meditations*, which, considering the effect of that publication on Dr. Johnson's character, and Mr. Boswell's zealous claims to accuracy in all such matters, are rather strange. Indeed it seems as if Mr. Boswell had read either too hastily or not at all the preface to Dr. Strahan's book. In the first place, as has been already stated (*ante*, preface and vol. i. p. 213), this *collection* was not, as Mr. Boswell seems to suppose, made by *Dr. Johnson* himself; nor did *he* give it the designation of "*Prayers and Meditations*;" nor do the original papers bear any appearance of having been intended for the press—quite the contrary! Dr. Strahan's preface indeed is not so clear on this point as it ought to have been; but even from it we learn that whatever Johnson's *intentions* were as to revising and collecting for publication his scattered prayers, he in fact did nothing but place a confused mass of papers in Dr. Strahan's hands, and from the inspection of the papers themselves it is quite evident that Dr. Strahan thought proper to weave into one work materials that were never intended to come together. This consideration is important, because, as has been before observed but cannot be too often repeated, the *prayers* are mixed up with notices and memoranda of Dr. Johnson's conduct and thoughts (called *by Dr. Strahan*, "*Meditations*"), which, affecting and edifying as they may be when read as the secret effusions of a good man's conscience, would have a very different character if they could be supposed to be left behind him ostentatiously *prepared for publication*.—ED.]

myself. I staid at Oxford till Tuesday, and then came in the common vehicle easily to London. I am as I was, and having seen Dr. Brocklesby, am to ply the squills; but, whatever be their efficacy, this world must soon pass away. Let us think seriously on our duty. I send my kindest respects to dear Mrs. Careless: let me have the prayers of both. We have all lived long, and must soon part. God have mercy on us, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

His correspondence with me, after his letter on the subject of my settling in London, shall now, so far as is proper, be produced in one series.

July 26 he wrote to me from Ashbourne,

"On the 14th I came to Lichfield, and found every body glad enough to see me. On the 20th I came hither, and found a house half-built, of very uncomfortable appearance; but my own room has not been altered. That a man worn with diseases, in his seventy-second or third year, should condemn part of his remaining life to pass among ruins and rubbish, and that no inconsiderable part, appears to me very strange. I know that your kindness makes you impatient to know the state of my health, in which I cannot boast of much improvement. I came through the journey without much inconvenience, but when I attempt self-motion I find my legs weak, and my breath very short: this day I have been much disordered. I have no company; the doctor[1] is busy in his fields, and goes to bed at nine, and his whole system is so different from mine, that we seem formed for different elements; I have, therefore, all my amusement to seek within myself."

Having written to him in bad spirits a letter filled with dejection and fretfulness[2], and at the same time expressing anxious apprehensions concerning him,

[1] The Reverend Dr. Taylor.—BOSWELL.

[2] [Dr. Johnson and others of Mr. Boswell's friends used to disbelieve and therefore ridicule his mental inquietudes—that "*Jemmy Boswell*" should be afflicted with *melancholy* was what none of his acquaintance could imagine, and as he seemed sometimes to make a parade of these miseries, they thought he was aping Dr. Johnson, who was admitted to be really a sufferer, though *he* endeavoured to conceal it. But after all, there can be no doubt that Mr. Boswell was liable to great inequalities of spirits, which will account for many of the peculiarities of his character, and should induce us to pity what his cotemporaries laughed at.—ED.]

on account of a dream which had disturbed me; his answer was chiefly in terms of reproach, for a supposed charge of "affecting discontent, and indulging the vanity of complaint." It, however, proceeded,

"Write to me often, and write like a man. I consider your fidelity and tenderness as a great part of the comforts which are yet left me, and sincerely wish we could be nearer to each other. *******. My dear friend, life is very short and very uncertain; let us spend it as well as we can. My worthy neighbour, Allen, is dead. Love me as well as you can. Pay my respects to dear Mrs. Boswell. Nothing ailed me at that time; let your superstition at last have an end."

Feeling very soon that the manner in which he had written might hurt me, he, two days afterwards, wrote to me again, giving me an account of his sufferings; after which he thus proceeds:

"28th July.

"Before this letter you will have had one which I hope you will not take amiss; for it contains only truth, and that truth kindly intended. *******_Spartam quam nactus es orna;_ make the most and best of your lot, and compare yourself not with the few that are above you, but with the multitudes which are below you. ******. Go steadily forwards with lawful business or honest diversions. 'Be,' as Temple says of the Dutchmen, 'well when you are not ill, and pleased when you are not angry.' *****. This may seem but an ill return for your tenderness; but I mean it well, for I love you with great ardour and sincerity. Pay my respects to dear Mrs. Boswell, and teach the young ones to love me."

I unfortunately was so much indisposed during a considerable part of the year, that it was not, or at least I thought it was not in my power to write to my illustrious friend as formerly, or without expressing such complaints as offended him. Having conjured him not to do me the injustice of charging me with affectation, I was with much regret long silent.

His last letter to me then came, and affected me very tenderly:

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"Lichfield, 5th November, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I have this summer sometimes amended, and sometimes relapsed, but, upon the whole, have lost ground very much. My legs are extremely weak, and my breath very short, and the water is now increasing upon me. In this uncomfortable state your letters used to relieve; what is the reason that I have them no longer? Are you sick, or are you sullen? Whatever be the reason, if it be less than necessity, drive it away; and of the short life that we have, make the best use for yourself and for your friends. ******. I am sometimes afraid that your omission to write has some real cause, and shall be glad to know that you are not sick, and that nothing ill has befallen dear Mrs. Boswell, or any of your family. I am, sir, your, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

Yet it was not a little painful to me to find, that in a paragraph of this letter, which I have omitted, he still persevered in arraigning me as before, which was strange in him who had so much experience of what I suffered. I, however, wrote to him two as kind letters as I could; the last of which came too late to be read by him, for his illness increased more rapidly upon him than I had apprehended; but I had the consolation of being informed that he spoke of me on his death-bed with affection, and I look forward with humble hope of renewing our friendship in a better world.

I now relieve the readers of this work from any farther personal notice of its authour; who, if he should be thought to have obtruded himself too much upon their attention, requests them to consider the peculiar plan of his biographical undertaking.

Soon after Johnson's return to the metropolis, both the asthma and dropsy became more violent and

distressful. He had for some time kept a journal in Latin of the state of his illness, and the remedies which he used, under the title of *Ægri Ephemeris*, which he began on the 6th of July, but continued it no longer than the 8th of November; finding, I suppose, that it was a mournful and unavailing register. It is in my possession; and is written with great care and accuracy.

Still his love of literature[1] did not fail. A very few days before his death he transmitted to his friend, Mr. John Nichols, a list of the authours of the Universal History, mentioning their several shares in that work. It has, according to his direction, been deposited in the British Museum, and is printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for December, 1784[2].

During his sleepless nights he amused himself by translating into Latin verse, from the Greek, many of the epigrams in the "Anthologia." These trans-

[1] It is truly wonderful to consider the extent and constancy of Johnson's literary ardour, notwithstanding the melancholy which clouded and embittered his existence. Besides the numerous and various works which he executed, he had, at different times, formed schemes of a great many more, of which the following catalogue was given by him to Mr. Langton, and by that gentleman presented to his Majesty.—BOSWELL. [This *catalogue*, as Mr. Boswell calls it, is, by Dr. Johnson himself, intitled "DESIGNS," and is written in a few pages of a small duodecimo note-book bound in rough calf. It seems from the hand, that it was written early in life: from the marginal dates it appears that some portions were added in 1752 and 1753. In the first page of this little volume, his late Majesty King George III. wrote *with his own hand*:

"*Original Manuscripts*
of Dr. Samuel Johnson,
presented by his friend,
—— Langton, Esq.
April 16th, 1785.
G. R."

It has been thought more convenient to transfer this catalogue to the appendix.—ED.]

[2] As the letter accompanying this list (which fully supports the observation in the text) was written but a week before Dr. Johnson's death, the reader may not be displeased to find it here preserved:

"TO MR. NICHOLS.

"6th December, 1784.

"The late learned Mr. Swinton, having one day remarked that one man, meaning, I suppose, no man but himself, could assign all the parts of the Ancient Universal History to their proper authours, at the request of Sir Robert Chambers, or of myself, gave the account which I now transmit to you in his

lations, with some other poems by him in Latin, he gave to his friend Mr. Langton, who, having added a few notes, sold them to the booksellers for a small sum to be given to some of Johnson's relations, which was accordingly done; and they are printed in the collection of his works.

A very erroneous notion has circulated as to Johnson's deficiency in the knowledge of the Greek language, partly owing to the modesty[1] with which,

own hand; being willing that of so great a work the history should be known, and that each writer should receive his due proportion of praise from posterity.

"I recommend to you to preserve this scrap of literary intelligence in Mr. Swinton's own hand, or to deposit it in the Museum, that the veracity of this account may never be doubted. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. S——n.

The History of the	—— Nigritæ.
—— Carthaginians.	—— Cyrenaica.
—— Numidians.	—— Marmarica.
—— Mauritanians.	—— Regio Syrtica.
—— Gætulians.	—— Turks, Tartars, and Moguls.
—— Garamanthes.	—— Indians.
—— Melano Gætulians.	—— Chinese.

Dissertation on the peopling of America.

—— —— independency of the Arabs.

The Cosmogony, and a small part of the History immediately following; by Mr. Sale.

To the birth of Abraham; chiefly by Mr. Shelvock.

History of the Jews, Gauls, and Spaniards; by Mr. Psalmanazar.

Xenophon's Retreat; by the same.

History of the Persians and the Constantinopolitan Empire; by Dr. Campbell.

History of the Romans; by Mr. Bower.—BOSWELL. [Bishop Warburton, in a letter to Jortin, in 1749, speaks with great contempt of this work as "miserable trash," and "the infamous rhapsody called the Universal History." *Nichol. Anec.* vol. ii. p. 173. But Mr. Gibbon's more favourable opinion of this work will, as Mr. Markland observes, claim as much attention as the "decrees" of Warburton, who has not improperly been termed by the former "the dictator and tyrant of the world of literature." Gibbon speaks of the "excellence of the first part of the Universal History as generally admitted." The History of the Macedonians, he also observes, "is executed with much erudition, taste, and judgment. This history would be invaluable were all its parts of the same merit."—*Miscel. Works*, v. 411, 426. Some curious facts relating to this work, and especially those parts of it committed to himself, will be found in Psalmanazar's Memoirs, p. 291.—ED.]

[1] [On the subject of Dr. Johnson's skill in Greek, the Editor has great pleasure in quoting an anecdote told by his dear and lamented friend, the late Mr. Gifford, in his Life of Ford: "My friend the late Lord Grosvenor had a house at Salt-hill, where I usually spent a part of the summer, and thus became acquainted with that great and good man Jacob Bryant. Here the conversation turned one morning on a Greek criticism by Dr. Johnson in some volume lying on the table, which I ventured *(for I was then young)* to deem incorrect, and pointed it out to him. I could not help thinking that he was something of my opinion, but he was cautious and reserved. 'But, sir,' said I,

from knowing how much there was to be learnt, he used to mention his own comparative acquisitions. When Mr. Cumberland [1] talked to him of the Greek fragments which are so well illustrated in "The Observer," and of the Greek dramatists in general, he candidly acknowledged his insufficiency in that particular branch of Greek literature. Yet it may be said, that though not a great, he was a good Greek scholar. Dr. Charles Burney, the younger, who is universally acknowledged by the best judges to be one of the few men of this age who are very eminent for their skill in that noble language, has assured me, that Johnson could give a Greek word for almost every English one; and that although not sufficiently conversant in the niceties of the language, he, upon some occasions, discovered, even in these, a considerable degree of critical acumen. Mr. Dalzel, professor of Greek at Edinburgh, whose skill is unquestionable, mentioned to me, in very liberal terms, the impression which was made upon him by Johnson, in a conversation which they had in London concerning that language. As Johnson, therefore,

willing to overcome his scruples, 'Dr. Johnson himself admitted that he was not a good Greek scholar.' 'Sir,' he replied with a serious and impressive air, 'it is not easy for us to say what such a man as Johnson would call a good Greek scholar.' I hope that I profited by that lesson—certainly I never forgot it." Gifford's Works of Ford, vol. i. p. lxii.—ED.]

[1] Mr. Cumberland assures me, that he was always treated with great courtesy by Dr. Johnson, who, in his "Letters to Mrs. Thrale," vol. ii. p. 68. thus speaks of that learned, ingenious, and accomplished gentleman: "The want of company is an inconvenience, but Mr. Cumberland is a million."—BOSWELL. [The following is Mr. Cumberland's own evidence on the points alluded to by Mr. Boswell: "In quickness of intellect few ever equalled him; in profundity of erudition many have surpassed him. I do not think he had a pure and classical taste, nor was apt to be best pleased with the best authors, but as a general scholar he ranks very high. When I would have consulted him upon certain points of literature, whilst I was making my collections from the Greek dramatists for my essays in the Observer, he candidly acknowledged that his studies had not lain amongst them; and certain it is there is very little show of literature in his Ramblers; and in the passage where he quotes Aristotle he has not correctly given the meaning of the original: but this was merely the result of haste and inattention. Neither is he so to be measured, for he had so many parts and properties of scholarship about him, that you can only fairly review him as a man of general knowledge."—*Cumberland's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 361.—ED.]

was undoubtedly one of the first Latin scholars in modern times, let us not deny to his fame some additional splendour from Greek[1].

Piozzi, p. 41. [Even Mrs. Piozzi used to think Dr. Johnson more free than prudent in professing so loudly his little skill in the Greek language: for though he considered it as a proof of a narrow mind to be too careful of literary reputation[2], yet no man could be more enraged than he, if an enemy, taking advantage of this confession, twitted him with his ignorance. When the King of Denmark was in England[3], one of his noblemen was brought by Mr. Colman to see Dr. Johnson at Mr. Thrale's country-house; and having heard, he said, that he was not famous for Greek literature, attacked him on the weak side; politely adding, that he chose that conversation on purpose to favour himself. Dr. Johnson, however, displayed so copious a knowledge of authors, books, and every branch of learning in that language, that the gentleman appeared astonished. When he was gone, Johnson said, "Now for all this triumph I may thank Thrale's Xenophon here, as, I think, excepting that *one*, I have not looked in a Greek book these ten years; but see what haste my dear friends were all in," continued he, "to tell this poor innocent foreigner that I knew nothing of Greek! Oh no! he knows nothing of Greek!" with a loud burst of laughing[4].]

Johnson's affection for his departed relations seemed to grow warmer as he approached nearer to the time when he might hope to see them again. It

[1] [In this place Mr. Boswell had introduced extracts from cotemporary writers whom he supposed to have imitated Johnson's style, which it has been thought convenient to transpose to the end of the life.—Ed.]

[2] [Mrs. Piozzi would probably have expressed Johnson's sentiments more correctly if she had said, "He considered it a proof of a narrow mind to pretend to learning which one did not really possess."—Ed.]

[3] [In 1768.—Ed.]

[4] [It has been said that Dr. Johnson never exerted such steady application as he did for the last ten years of his life in the study of Greek.—Ed.]

probably appeared to him that he should upbraid himself with unkind inattention, were he to leave the world without having paid a tribute of respect to their memory. Piozzi, p. 41.

"TO MR. GREEN, APOTHECARY, AT LICHFIELD[1].

"2nd December, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I have enclosed the epitaph for my father, mother, and brother, to be all engraved on the large size, and laid in the middle aisle in St. Michael's church, which I request the clergyman and churchwardens to permit.

"The first care must be to find the exact place of interment, that the stone may protect the bodies. Then let the stone be deep, massy, and hard; and do not let the difference of ten pounds, or more, defeat our purpose.

"I have enclosed ten pounds, and Mrs. Porter will pay you ten more, which I gave her for the same purpose. What more is wanted shall be sent; and I beg that all possible haste may be made, for I wish to have it done while I am yet alive. Let me know, dear sir, that you receive this. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD[2].

"2nd December, 1784.

"DEAR MADAM,—I am very ill, and desire your prayers. I have sent Mr. Green the epitaph, and a power to call on you for ten pounds.

"I laid this summer a stone over Tetty, in the chapel of Bromley in Kent. The inscription is in Latin[3], of which this is the English. (Here a translation.)

"That this is done, I thought it fit that you should know. What care will be taken of us, who can tell? May God pardon and bless us, for Jesus Christ's sake I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

My readers are now, at last, to behold SAMUEL JOHNSON preparing himself for that doom, from

[1] [A relation of Dr. Johnson]. *Ante*, vol. iii. p. 353.—BOSWELL.

[2] This lady, whose name so frequently occurs in the course of this work, survived Dr. Johnson just thirteen months. She died at Lichfield, in her 71st year, January 13, 1786, and bequeathed the principal part of her fortune to the Rev. Mr. Pearson, of Lichfield.—MALONE.

[3] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 219.—ED.]

which the most exalted powers afford no exemption to man. Death had always been to him an object of terrour; so that, though by no means happy, he still clung to life with an eagerness at which many have wondered. At any time when he was ill, he was very much pleased to be told that he looked better. An ingenious member of the *Eumelian Club*[1] informs me, that upon one occasion, when he said to him that he saw health returning to his cheek, Johnson seized him by the hand and exclaimed, "Sir, you are one of the kindest friends I ever had."

His own statement of his views of futurity will appear truly rational; and may, perhaps, impress the unthinking with seriousness.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 3.

"You know," says he[2] to Mrs. Thrale, "I never thought confidence with respect to futurity any part of the character of a brave, a wise, or a good man. Bravery has no place where it can avail nothing; wisdom impresses strongly the consciousness of those faults, of which it is, perhaps, itself an aggravation; and goodness, always wishing to be better, and imputing every deficience to criminal negligence, and every fault to voluntary corruption, never dares to suppose the condition of forgiveness fulfilled, nor what is wanting in the crime supplied by penitence.

"This is the state of the best; but what must be the condition of him whose heart will not suffer him to rank himself among the best, or among the good? Such must be his dread of the approaching trial, as

[1] A club in London, founded by the learned and ingenious physician, Dr. Ash, in honour of whose name it was called *Eumelian* [literally, *well-ashed*], from the Greek Ευμελιας: though it was warmly contended, and even put to a vote, that it should have the more obvious appellation of *Fraxinean*, from the Latin.—BOSWELL.

[2] Mrs. Thrale's Collection, 10th March, 1784.—BOSWELL.

will leave him little attention to the opinion of those whom he is leaving for ever; and the serenity that is not felt, it can be no virtue to feign.

His great fear of death[1], and the strange dark manner in which Sir John Hawkins[2] imparts the uneasiness which he expressed on account of offences with which he charged himself, may give occasion to injurious suspicions, as if there had been something of more than ordinary criminality weighing upon his conscience. On that account, therefore, as well as from the regard to truth which he inculcated[3], I am to mention (with all possible respect and delicacy, however), that his conduct, after he came to London, and had associated with Savage and others, was not so strictly virtuous, in one respect, as when he was a younger man. It was well known that his amorous inclinations were uncommonly strong and impetuous. He owned to many of his friends, that he used to take women of the town to taverns, and hear them relate their history.—In short, it must not be concealed, that like many other good and pious men,

[1] Mrs. Carter, in one of her letters to Mrs. Montague, says, "I see by the papers, that Dr. Johnson is dead. In extent of learning, and exquisite purity of moral writing, he has left no superior, and I fear very few equals. His virtues and his piety were founded on the steadiest of Christian principles and faith. His faults, I firmly believe, arose from the irritations of a most suffering state of nervous constitution, which scarcely ever allowed him a moment's ease."—Boswell. [She adds, "You wonder 'that an undoubted believer and a man of piety should be afraid of death;' but it is such characters who have ever the deepest sense of their imperfections and deviations from the rule of duty, of which the very best must be conscious; and such a temper of mind as is struck with awe and humility at the prospect of the last solemn sentence appears much better suited to the wretched deficiencies of the best human performances than the thoughtless security that rushes undisturbed into eternity."—*Miss Carter's Life*, vol. ii. p. 166.

To this passage the editor of Mrs. Carter's Letters subjoins:

"Mrs. Carter told the editor, that in one of the last conversations which she had with this eminent moralist, she told him that she had never known him say any thing contrary to the principles of the Christian religion. He seized her hand with great emotion, exclaiming, 'You know this, and bear witness to it when I am gone!'"—*Mrs. Carter's Letters to Mrs. Montague*, vol. iii. p. 234.—Ed.]

[2] [Again the editor is obliged to say, that he can see nothing more *strange* or *dark* in Hawkins's expressions than in Mr. Boswell's—nay, than in Dr. Johnson's own.—Ed.]

[3] See what he said to Mr. Malone, vol. iv. p. 421.—Boswell.

among whom we may place the apostle Paul upon his own authority, Johnson was not free from propensities which were ever "warring against the law of his mind,"—and that in his combats with them, he was sometimes overcome[1].

Here let the profane and licentious pause; let them not thoughtlessly say that Johnson was an *hypocrite*, or that his *principles* were not firm, because his *practice* was not uniformly conformable to what he professed.

Let the question be considered independent of moral and religious associations; and no man will deny that thousands, in many instances, act against conviction. Is a prodigal, for example, an *hypocrite*, when he owns he is satisfied that his extravagance will bring him to ruin and misery? We are *sure* he *believes* it; but immediate inclination, strengthened by indulgence, prevails over that belief in influencing his conduct. Why then shall credit be refused to the *sincerity* of those who acknowledge their persuasion of moral and religious duty, yet sometimes fail of living as it requires? I heard Dr. Johnson once observe, "There is something noble in publishing truth, though it condemns one's self[2]." And one who said in his presence, "he had no

[1] [Surely Mr. Boswell might have been forgiven if he had not revived these stories, which, whether true or false originally, were near fifty years old. He had already said (*ante*, vol. i. p. 140) quite enough, and perhaps more than he was *authorized* to say, on this topic. The reader will recollect that it has been shown (*ante*, vol. i. pp. 96. 139 and 140, *n.*) that the duration, and probably the intensity, of Dr. Johnson's intimacy with Savage have been greatly exaggerated, and so, no doubt, have been the supposed consequences of that intimacy. The editor does not wish to enter into more *detail* on this disagreeable subject, but his "*regard for truth*" obliges him to declare his opinion, that Mr. Boswell's introduction of this topic, his pretended candour, and hollow defence, were unwarranted by any evidence, and are the most, indeed almost the only, discreditable points of his whole work.—ED.]

[2] Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, vol. ii. p. 431. On the same subject, in his letter to Mrs. Thrale, dated November 29, 1783, he makes the following just observation: "Life, to be worthy of a rational being, must be always in progression; we must always purpose to do more or better than in time past. The mind is enlarged and elevated by mere purposes, though they end as they

notion of people being in earnest in their good professions, whose practice was not suitable to them," was thus reprimanded by him:—"Sir, are you so grossly ignorant of human nature as not to know that a man may be very sincere in good principles, without having good practice[1]?"

But let no man encourage or soothe himself in "presumptuous sin," from knowing that Johnson was sometimes hurried into indulgences which he thought criminal. I have exhibited this circumstance as a shade in so great a character, both from my sacred love of truth, and to show that he was not so weakly scrupulous[2] as he has been represented by those who imagine that the sins, of which a deep sense was upon his mind, were merely such little venial trifles as pouring milk into his tea on Good-Friday. His understanding will be defended by my statement, if his consistency of conduct be in some degree impaired. But what wise man would, for momentary gratifications, deliberately subject himself to suffer such uneasiness as we find was experienced by Johnson in reviewing his conduct as compared with his notion of the ethicks of the gospel? Let the following passages be kept in remembrance:

"O God, giver and preserver of all life, by whose power I was created, and by whose providence I am sustained, look down Prayers & Med. p. 47.

began, by airy contemplation. We compare and judge, though we do not practise."—BOSWELL.

[1] Ibid, vol. iii. p. 55.

[2] [In one of the manuscripts communicated by Mr. Anderdon there is a note, dated in 1784, by which it appears that Johnson was aware that he was sometimes over scrupulous, for it records a resolution "to endeavour to conquer *scruples*." These *scruples*, which have been so unfeelingly exposed to the world, ought at least to have relieved him from these imputations which Mr. Boswell *alone* has raised against him. He cannot be supposed to have been minutely scrupulous about *trifles* while habitually guilty of *crimes*: and the editor must repeat, that the conscientious sincerity of Johnson's self-confessions, and the long period over which they extend, ought alone to have sufficed to repel such insinuations. And it ought to be recollected, that Mr. Boswell, who revives this antiquated scandal, was yet very indignant with Mrs. Piozzi for telling an unfavourable story of a momentary *rudeness* to Mr. Cholmondeley. See *ante*, p. 259, *n.*—ED.]

Prayers & Med. p. 47. upon me with tenderness and mercy; grant that I may not have been created to be finally destroyed; that I may not be preserved to add wickedness to wickedness."

P. 68. "O Lord, let me not sink into total depravity; look down upon me, and rescue me at last from the captivity of sin."

P. 84. "Almighty and most merciful Father, who hath continued my life from year to year, grant that by longer life I may become less desirous of sinful pleasures, and more careful of eternal happiness."

P. 120. "Let not my years be multiplied to increase my guilt; but as my age advances, let me become more pure in my thoughts, more regular in my desires, and more obedient to thy laws."

P. 130. "Forgive, O merciful Lord, whatever I have done contrary to thy laws. Give me such a sense of my wickedness as may produce true contrition and effectual repentance: so that when I shall be called into another state, I may be received among the sinners to whom sorrow and reformation have obtained pardon, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

Such was the distress of mind, such the penitence of Johnson, in his hours of privacy, and in his devout approaches to his Maker. His *sincerity*, therefore, must appear to every candid mind unquestionable.

It is of essential consequence to keep in view, that there was in this excellent man's conduct no false principle of *commutation*, no *deliberate* indulgence in sin, in consideration of a counterbalance of duty. His offending and his repenting were distinct and separate[1]: and when we consider his almost unexampled attention to truth, his inflexible integrity, his constant piety, who will dare to "cast a stone at him?" Besides, let it never be forgotten that he cannot be charged with any offence indicating badness of *heart*, any thing dishonest, base, or malignant; but that, on the contrary, he was charitable in an extraordinary degree: so that even in one of his own

[1] Dr. Johnson related, with very earnest approbation, a story of a gentleman, who, in an impulse of passion, overcame the virtue of a young woman. When she said to him, "I am afraid we have done wrong!" he answered, "Yes, we have done wrong;—for I would not *debauch her mind*."—BOSWELL.

rigid judgements of himself (Easter-eve, 1781), while he says, "I have corrected no external habits;" he is obliged to own, "I hope that since my last communion I have advanced, by pious reflections, in my submission to God, and my benevolence to man." Prayers & Med. p. 192.

I am conscious that this is the most difficult and dangerous part of my biographical work, and I cannot but be very anxious concerning it. I trust that I have got through it, preserving at once my regard to truth,—to my friend,—and to the interests of virtue and religion. Nor can I apprehend that more harm can ensue from the knowledge of the irregularities of Johnson, guarded as I have stated it, than from knowing that Addison and Parnell were intemperate in the use of wine; which he himself, in his Lives of those celebrated writers and pious men, has not forborne to record[1].

It is not my intention to give a very minute detail of the particulars of Johnson's remaining days[2], of whom it was now evident, that the crisis was fast approaching, when he must "*die like men, and fall like one of the princes.*" Yet it will be instructive, as well as gratifying to the curiosity of my readers, to record a few circumstances, on the authenticity of 82d Ps. v. 7.

[1] [Mr. Boswell makes here a poor and disingenuous defence for a very grievous error. It is one thing to *repeat*—as Dr. Johnson did, *historically*, what all the world knew, and few were inclined to blame seriously—that Parnell and Addison loved a cheerful glass—

"Narratur et prisci Catonis
Sæpe mero caluisse virtus."

But it is quite *another thing* to insinuate oneself into a man's confidence, to follow him for twenty years like his shadow, to note his words and actions like a spy, to ransack his most secret papers, and scrutinize even his conscientious confessions, and *then*, with all the sinister authority which such a show of friendship must confer, to accuse him of low and filthy guilt *supposed* to have been committed a quarter of a century before the informer and his calumniated friend had ever met, and which, consequently, Mr. Boswell could only have had from hearsay or from guess, and which all personal testimony and all the documentary evidence seem to disprove. Surely Mr. Boswell's good sense, good taste, and good feeling, must have, on this occasion, given way under some powerful *self-delusion*.—Ed.]

[2] [The particulars which Mr. Boswell's absence, and the jealousy between him and some of Johnson's other friends, prevented *his* being able to give, the editor is now at liberty to supply from Hawkins's work, as well as from an interesting journal of Mr. Windham's.—Ed.]

which they may perfectly rely, as I have been at the utmost pains to obtain an accurate account of his last illness, from the best authority.

Dr. Heberden, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Warren, and Dr. Butter, physicians, generously attended him, without accepting any fees, as did Mr. Cruikshank, surgeon; and all that could be done from professional skill and ability was tried, to prolong a life so truly valuable. He himself, indeed, having, on account of his very bad constitution, been perpetually applying himself to medical inquiries, united his own efforts with those of the gentlemen who attended him; and imagining that the dropsical collection of water which oppressed him might be drawn off by making incisions in his body, he, with his usual resolute defiance of pain, cut deep, when he thought that his surgeon had done it too tenderly[1].

About eight or ten days before his death, when Dr. Brocklesby paid him his morning visit, he seemed very low and desponding, and said, "I have been as a dying man all night." He then emphatically broke out in the words of Shakspeare,

Macb. act v. sc. 3.

> "Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased;
> Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
> Raze out the written troubles of the brain;
> And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
> Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff,
> Which weighs upon the heart?"

To which Dr. Brocklesby readily answered from the same great poet:

> "——————— Therein the patient
> Must minister to himself."

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[1] This bold experiment Sir John Hawkins has related in such a manner as to suggest a charge against Johnson of intentionally hastening his end; a charge so very inconsistent with his character in every respect, that it is injurious even to refute it, as Sir John has thought it necessary to do. It is evident, that what Johnson did in hopes of relief indicated an extraordinary eagerness to retard his dissolution.—BOSWELL. [If Sir J. Hawkins, whose account the reader will presently see (*post*, p. 341), makes rather too much of this singular incident, surely Mr. Boswell treats too lightly the morbid impatience which induced Dr. Johnson to take the lancet into his own hands.—ED.]

Johnson expressed himself much satisfied with the application.

On another day after this, when talking on the subject of prayer, Dr. Brocklesby repeated from Juvenal,

"Orandum est, ut sit mens sana in corpore sano," Sat. x. v. 356.

and so on to the end of the tenth satire; but in running it quickly over, he happened, in the line,

"Qui spatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat[1],"

to pronounce *supremum* for *extremum;* at which Johnson's critical ear instantly took offence, and discoursing vehemently on the unmetrical effect of such a lapse, he showed himself as full as ever of the spirit of the grammarian.

Having no other relations[2], it had been for some time Johnson's intention to make a liberal provision for his faithful servant, Mr. Francis Barber, whom

[1] [Mr. Boswell has omitted to notice *the* line, for the sake of which Dr. Brocklesby probably introduced the quotation,

"Fortem posce animum et *mortis terrore carentem!*"

[2] The authour in a former page has shown the injustice of Sir John Hawkins's charge against Johnson, with respect to a person of the name of Heely, whom he has inaccurately represented as a relation of Johnson's. See p. 285. That Johnson was anxious to discover whether any of his relations were living, is evinced by the following letter, written not long before he made his will:

"TO THE REV. DR. VYSE, IN LAMBETH.

"SIR,

"I am desirous to know whether Charles Scrimshaw, of Woodcase (I think), in your father's neighbourhood, be now living; what is his condition, and where he may be found. If you can conveniently make any inquiry about him, and can do it without delay, it will be an act of great kindness to me, he being very nearly related to me. I beg [you] to pardon this trouble.

"I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, Nov. 29, 1784." "SAM. JOHNSON."

In conformity to the wish expressed in the preceding letter, an inquiry was made, but no descendants of Charles Scrimshaw or of his sisters, were discovered to be living. Dr. Vyse informs me, that Dr. Johnson told him, "he was disappointed in the inquiries he had made after his relations." There is therefore no ground whatsoever for supposing that he was unmindful of them, or neglected them.—MALONE. [Surely Mr. Malone's conclusion is rather too strong, when his premises show that Dr. Johnson had so long and so utterly neglected these relatives, that when, within a month of his death, he set about inquiring after them, all traces of their existence had vanished.—ED.]

he looked upon as particularly under his protection, and whom he had all along treated truly as an humble friend. Having asked Dr. Brocklesby what would be a proper annuity to a favourite servant, and being answered that it must depend on the circumstances of the master; and that in the case of a nobleman fifty pounds a year was considered as an adequate reward for many years' faithful service;—"Then," said Johnson, "shall I be *nobilissimus*, for I mean to leave Frank seventy pounds a year, and I desire you to tell him so." It is strange, however, to think, that Johnson was not free from that general weakness of being averse to execute a will, so that he delayed it from time to time; and had it not been for Sir John Hawkins's repeatedly urging it, I think it is probable that his kind resolution would not have been fulfilled[1].

Hawk. p. 575. ["After the declaration he had made of his intention to provide for his servant Frank," says Sir J. Hawkins, "and before his going into the country, I had frequently pressed him to make a will, and had gone so far as to make a draft of one, with blanks for the names of the executors and residuary legatee, and directing in what manner it was to be executed and attested; but he was exceedingly averse to this business; and, while he was in Derbyshire, I repeated my solicitations, for this purpose, by letters. When Dr. Johnson arrived in town, he had done nothing in it, and, to what I formerly said, I now added, that he had never mentioned the disposal of the residue of his estate, which, after the purchase of an annuity for Frank, would be something considerable, and that he would do well to bequeath it

[1] [Here followed in a note Dr. Johnson's will, which, as well as some subsequent paragraphs of Mr. Boswell's work, the editor has transposed, for the sake of what seems to him a better order.—ED.]

to his relations. His answer was, 'I care not what becomes of the residue.' A few days after, it appeared that he had executed the draft, the blanks remaining, with all the solemnities of a real will. I could get him no farther, and thus, for some time, the matter rested. Hawk. p. 579.

"His complaints still increasing, I continued pressing him to make a will; but he still procrastinated that business. On the 27th of November, in the morning, I went to his house, with a purpose still farther to urge him not to give occasion, by dying intestate, for litigation among his relations; but finding that he was gone to pass the day with the Rev. Mr. Strahan, at Islington, I followed him thither, and found there our old friend Mr. Ryland, and Mr. Hoole. Upon my sitting down, he said, that the prospect of the change he was about to undergo, and the thought of meeting his Saviour, troubled him, but that he had hope that he would not reject him. I then began to discourse with him about his will, and the provision for Frank, till he grew angry. He told me that he had signed and sealed the paper I left him; but that, said I, had blanks in it, which, as it seems, you have not filled up with the names of the executors. 'You should have filled them up yourself,' answered he. I replied that such an act would have looked as if I meant to prevent his choice of a fitter person. 'Sir,' said he, 'these minor virtues are not to be exercised in matters of such importance as this.' At length, he said, that on his return home he would send for a clerk, and dictate a will to him. You will then, said I, be *inops consilii;* rather do it now. With Mr. Strahan's permission I will be his guest at dinner; and, if Mr. Hoole will please to hold the pen, I will, in a few words, make such a disposition of your estate as you

Hawk. p.580. shall direct.' To this he assented; but such a paroxysm of the asthma seized him as prevented our going on. As the fire burned up he found himself relieved, and grew cheerful. 'The fit,' said he, 'was very sharp; but I am now easy.' After I had dictated a few lines, I told him that the ancient form of wills contained a profession of the faith of the testator; and that he being a man of eminence for learning and parts, it would afford an illustrious example, and well become him, to make such an explicit declaration of his belief as might obviate all suspicions that he was any other than a Christian. He thanked me for the hint, and, calling for paper, wrote on a slip, that I had in my hand and gave him, the following words:—'I humbly commit to the infinite and eternal goodness of Almighty God my soul polluted with many sins; but, as I hope, purified by repentance, and redeemed, as I trust, by the death of Jesus Christ[1];' and, returning it to me, said, 'This I commit to your custody.'

"Upon my calling on him for directions to proceed, he told me that his father, in the course of his trade of a bookseller, had become bankrupt, and that Mr. William Innys had assisted him with money or credit to continue his business—'This,' said he, 'I consider as an obligation on me to be grateful to his descendants, and I therefore mean to give 200*l.* to his representative.' He then meditated a devise of his house at Lichfield to the corporation of that city for a charitable use; but, it being freehold, he said, 'I cannot live a twelvemonth, and the last statute of

[1] [The will of the other great luminary of that age, Mr. Burke, is throughout strikingly characteristick, and was no doubt chiefly drawn up by himself. Those who revere his memory will read with satisfaction the opening declaration. "First, according to the ancient, good, and laudable custom, *of which my heart and understanding recognize the propriety*, I bequeath my soul to God, hoping for his mercy through the only merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—MARKLAND.]

mortmain stands in the way: I must, therefore, think of some other disposition of it.' His next consideration was a provision for Frank, concerning the amount whereof I found he had been consulting Dr. Brocklesby, to whom he had put this question, 'What would be a proper annuity to bequeath to a favourite servant?' The doctor answered that the circumstances of the master were the truest measure, and that, in the case of a nobleman, 50*l.* a year was deemed an adequate reward for many years' faithful service. 'Then shall I,' said Johnson, 'be *nobilissimus*; for I mean to leave Frank 70*l.* a year, and I desire you to tell him so.' And now, at the making of the will, a devise, equivalent to such a provision, was therein inserted. The residue of his estate and effects, which took in, though he intended it not, the house at Lichfield, he bequeathed to his executors, in trust for a religious association, which it is needless to describe. Hawk. p. 581.

"Having executed the will with the necessary formalities, he would have come home, but being pressed by Mr. and Mrs. Strahan to stay, he consented, and we all dined together. Towards the evening he grew cheerful, and I having promised to take him in my coach, Mr. Strahan and Mr. Ryland would accompany him home. In the way thither he appeared much at ease, and told stories. At eight I set him down, and Mr. Strahan and Mr. Ryland betook themselves to their respective homes."]

The consideration of numerous papers of which he was possessed seems to have struck Johnson's mind with a sudden anxiety, and as they were in great confusion, it is much to be lamented that he had not intrusted some faithful and discreet person with the care and selection of them; instead of which he, in a precipitate manner, burnt large

masses of them, with little regard, as I apprehend, to discrimination. Not that I suppose we have thus been deprived of any compositions which he had ever intended for the publick eye; but from what escaped the flames I judge that many curious circumstances, relating both to himself and other literary characters, have perished.

Two very valuable articles, I am sure, we have lost, which were two quarto volumes[1], containing a full, fair, and most particular account of his own life, from his earliest recollection. I owned to him, that having accidentally seen them, I had read a great deal in them; and apologising for the liberty I had taken, asked him if I could help it. He placidly answered, "Why, sir, I do not think you could have helped it." I said that I had, for once in my life, felt half an inclination to commit theft. It had come into my mind to carry off those two volumes, and never see him more. Upon my inquiring how this would have affected him, "Sir," said he, "I believe I should have gone mad[2]."

[1] [There can be little doubt that these two quarto volumes were of the same kind as, if they were not actually *transcripts* of, the various little diaries which fell into the hands of Dr. Strahan and others; the strong expression, that he would have "*gone mad*" had they been purloined, confirms the editor's belief, that Dr. Johnson never could have intended that these diaries should have been published. The editor is confident that *they* were given to Dr. Strahan inadvertently, Johnson meaning to give the *prayers* alone, and he suspects that it was *by accident* only they escaped destruction on the 1st December.—ED.]

[2] One of these volumes, Sir John Hawkins informs us, he put into his pocket; for which the excuse he states is, that he meant to preserve it from falling into the hands of a person whom he describes so as to make it sufficiently clear who is meant [Mr. George Stevens]: "having strong reasons," said he, "to suspect that this man might find and make an ill use of the book." Why Sir John should suppose that the gentleman alluded to would act in this manner, he has not thought fit to explain. But what he did was not approved of by Johnson; who, upon being acquainted of it without delay by a friend, expressed great indignation, and warmly insisted on the book being delivered up; and, afterwards, in the supposition of his missing it, without knowing by whom it had been taken, he said, "Sir, I should have gone out of the world distrusting half mankind." Sir John next day wrote a letter to Johnson, assigning reasons for his conduct; upon which Johnson observed to Mr. Langton, "Bishop Sanderson could not have dictated a better letter. I could almost say, *Melius est sic penituisse quam non errâsse.*" The agitation into which Johnson was thrown by this incident probably made him hastily burn those precious records which must ever be regretted.—BOSWELL. [We shall see presently, in Hawkins's diary (1st and 5th December), more on

During his last illness Johnson experienced the steady and kind attachment of his numerous friends. Mr. Hoole has drawn up a narrative[1] of what passed in the visits which he paid him during that time, from the 10th of November to the 13th of December, the day of his death, inclusive, and has favoured me with a perusal of it, with permission to make extracts, which I have done.

Nobody was more attentive to him than Mr. Langton[2], to whom he tenderly said, *Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.* And I think it highly to the honour of Mr. Windham, that his important occupations as an active statesman did not prevent him from paying assiduous respect to the dying sage whom he revered.

Mr. Langton informs me, that "one day he found Mr. Burke and four or five more friends sitting with Johnson. Mr. Burke said to him, 'I am afraid, sir, such a number of us may be oppressive to you.'—'No, sir,' said Johnson, 'it is not so; and I must be in a wretched state indeed when your company would not be a delight to me.' Mr. Burke, in a tremulous voice, expressive of being very tenderly affected, replied, 'My dear sir, you have always been too good to me.' Immediately afterwards he went away. This was the last circumstance in the acquaintance of these two eminent men[3]."

The following particulars of his conversation within

the subject: but it is *not* certain that the volume which Hawkins took was one of these two quartos; and it is certain that a destruction of papers took place a day or two before that event. Johnson had really some reason for "distrusting mankind," when, of two dear friends, he found one half-inclined to commit a theft, and another more than half-committing it.—ED.]

[1] [This journal has been since printed at length in the European Magazine for September, 1799. As it could not be introduced in this place without dislocating Mr. Boswell's extracts and wholly deranging his narrative, the editor has thought it better to reserve it for the Appendix. It will be read with interest.—ED.]

[2] Mr. Langton, whose name so often occurs in these volumes, survived Johnson several years. He died at Southampton, December 18, 1801, aged sixty-five.—MALONE.

[3] [About the same time, death withdrew from the world Mr. Burke's old acquaintance, Dr. Johnson, from whom, in the vicissitudes of twenty-seven years, no estrangement occurred to intercept their mutual admiration and regard. He

a few days of his death I give on the authority of Mr. John Nichols:

Nichols. "He said, that the Parliamentary Debates were the only part of his writings which then gave him any compunction: but that at the time he wrote them he had no conception he was imposing upon the world, though they were frequently written from very slender materials, and often from none at all,—the mere coinage of his own imagination. He never wrote any part of his works with equal velocity. Three columns of the magazine in an hour was no uncommon effort, which was faster than most persons could have transcribed that quantity.

"Of his friend Cave he always spoke with great affection. 'Yet,' said he, 'Cave (who never looked out of his window but with a view to the Gentleman's Magazine) was a penurious paymaster; he would contract for lines by the hundred, and expect the long hundred; but he was a good man, and always delighted to have his friends at his table.'

"When talking of a regular edition of his own works, he said, that he had power (from the booksellers) to print such an edition, if his health admitted it; but had no power to assign over any edition, unless he could add notes, and so alter them as to make them new works; which his state of health forbade him to think of. 'I may possibly live,' said he, 'or rather breathe, three days, or perhaps three weeks; but find myself daily and gradually weaker.'

"He said at another time, three or four days only

followed Dr. Johnson to the grave as a mourner, and in contemplating his character, applied to it a fine passage from Cicero, which might equally suit his own: "Intentum enim animum quasi arcum habebat, nec languescens succumbebat senectuti." When some one censured Johnson's general rudeness in society, he replied with equal consideration and truth, "It is well, when a man comes to die, if he has nothing worse to accuse himself of than some harshness in conversation." He often remarked, that Johnson was greater in discourse than even in writing, and that Boswell's Life was the best record of his powers. In 1790 he was one of the committee formed to erect a statue to his memory.—*Prior's Life of Burke*, vol. i. p. 454.—ED.]

before his death, speaking of the little fear he had of undergoing a chirurgical operation, 'I would give one of these legs for a year more of life, I mean of comfortable life, not such as that which I now suffer;' —and lamented much his inability to read during his hours of restlessness. 'I used formerly,' he added, 'when sleepless in bed, *to read like a Turk.*' Nichols.

"Whilst confined by his last illness, it was his regular practice to have the church service read to him by some attentive and friendly divine. The Rev. Mr. Hoole performed this kind office in my presence for the last time, when, by his own desire, no more than the litany was read; in which his responses were in the deep and sonorous voice which Mr. Boswell has occasionally noticed, and with the most profound devotion that can be imagined. His hearing not being quite perfect, he more than once interrupted Mr. Hoole with, 'Louder, my dear sir, louder, I entreat you, or you pray in vain!'—and, when the service was ended, he, with great earnestness, turned round to an excellent lady who was present, saying, 'I thank you, madam, very heartily, for your kindness in joining me in this solemn exercise. Live well, I conjure you; and you will not feel the compunction at the last which I now feel[1].' So truly humble were the thoughts which this great and good man entertained of his own approaches to religious perfection.

"He was earnestly invited to publish a volume of *Devotional Exercises;* butt his (though he listened

[1] [There is a slight error in Mr. Nichols's account, as appears by the following communication from the Rev. Mr. Hoole himself, now rector of Poplar: "My mother was with us when I read prayers to Dr. Johnson, on Wednesday, December 8th; but not for the *last* time, as is stated by Mr. Nichols, for I attended him again on Friday, the 10th. I must here mention an incident which shows how ready Johnson was to make amends for any little incivility. When I called upon him, the morning after he had pressed me rather roughly to read *louder*, he said, 'I was peevish yesterday; you must forgive me: when you are as old and as sick as I am, perhaps you may be peevish too.' I have heard him make many apologies of this kind."—Ed.]

Nichols. to the proposal with much complacency, and a large sum of money was offered for it) he declined, from motives of the sincerest modesty.

"He seriously entertained the thought of translating *Thuanus*. He often talked to me on the subject; and once, in particular, when I was rather wishing that he would favour the world, and gratify his sovereign, by a Life of Spenser (which he said that he would readily have done had he been able to obtain any new materials for the purpose), he added, 'I have been thinking again, sir, of *Thuanus*: it would not be the laborious task which you have supposed it. I should have no trouble but that of dictation, which would be performed as speedily as an amanuensis could write.'"

On the same undoubted authority[1] I give a few articles which should have been inserted in chronological order, but which, now that they are before me, I should be sorry to omit:

"Among the early associates of Johnson, at St. John's Gate, was Samuel Boyse, well known by his ingenious productions; and not less noted for his imprudence[2]. It was not unusual for Boyse to be a

[1] [This, and the few next paragraphs, were in a *note* in former editions.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 71. Sir J. Hawkins has preserved the following tragi-comic petition, addressed by Boyse, from a sponging-house, to Cave, the printer, in 1742.

"INSCRIPTION FOR ST. LAZARUS'S CAVE.

"Hodie, teste cœlo summo,
Sine pane, sine nummo;
Sorte positus infeste,
Scribo tibi dolens mœste.
Fame, bile, tumet jecur:
Urbane, mitte opem, precor
Tibi enim cor humanum
Non a malis alienum:
Mihi mens nec male grato,
Pro a te favore dato.

"Ex gehennâ debitoria, "ALCÆUS."
"Vulgo, domo spongiatoria."

When Boyse's wife died, this strange man put his lap-dog into mourning by tying a black riband round his neck, and so carried the dog about in his arms to show his taste and sensibility. See Hawkins, p. 159.—Ed.]

customer to the pawnbroker. On one of these occa- Nichols.
sions, Dr. Johnson collected a sum of money to redeem his friend's clothes, which in two days after were pawned again. 'The sum,' said Johnson, 'was collected by sixpences, at a time when to me sixpence was a serious consideration.'

"Speaking one day of a person[1] for whom he had a real friendship, but in whom vanity was somewhat too predominant, he observed, that 'Kelly was so fond of displaying on his sideboard the plate which he possessed, that he added to it his spurs. For my part,' said he, 'I never was master of a pair of spurs, but once; and they are now at the bottom of the ocean. By the carelessness of Boswell's servant, they were dropped from the end of the boat, on our return from the Isle of Sky[2].' "

The late Reverend Mr. Samuel Badcock[3] having been introduced to Dr. Johnson by Mr. Nichols, some years before his death, thus expressed himself in a letter to that gentleman:

"How much I am obliged to you for the favour you did me in introducing me to Dr. Johnson! *Tantùm vidi Virgilium.* But to have seen him, and to have received a testimony of respect from him, was enough. I recollect all the conversation, and shall never forget one of his expressions. Speaking of Dr. P*******[4], (whose writings, I saw, he estimated at a low rate,) he said, 'You have proved him

[1] [Hugh Kelly, the dramatic author, who died in Gough-square in 1777, æt. 38. Kelly's first introduction to Johnson was not likely to have pleased a person of "predominant vanity." After having sat a short time, he got up to take his leave, saying, that he feared a longer visit might be troublesome. "Not in the least, sir." Johnson is said to have replied, "I had forgotten that you were in the room."—Ed.]

[2] [*Ante*, vol. ii. p. 394.—Ed.]

[3] [Chiefly known as a Monthly Reviewer, and for a controversy with Dr. Priestly, whose friend and admirer he had previously been. He had been bred a dissenter, but conformed to the established church, and was ordained in 1787. He died soon after, in May, 1788, æt. 41.—Ed.]

[4] [Priestly.—Ed.]

as deficient in *probity* as he is in learning.' I called him an '*Index-Scholar*;' but he was not willing to allow him a claim even to that merit. He said, 'that he borrowed from those who had been borrowers themselves, and did not know that the mistakes he adopted had been answered by others.' I often think of our short, but precious visit, to this great man. I shall consider it as a kind of an *æra* in my life."

It is to the mutual credit of Johnson and divines of different communions, that although he was a steady church of England man, there was, nevertheless, much agreeable intercourse between him and them. Let me particularly name the late Mr. La Trobe[1], and Mr. Hutton, of the Moravian profession. His intimacy with the English Benedictines at Paris has been mentioned; and as an additional proof of the charity in which he lived with good men of the

[1] [The son of Mr. La Trobe has published (in the Christian Observer for January, 1828), "in order," as he says, "that the tradition may not be lost," a corroboration of some remarks, which appeared in that work for the October and November preceding, on the last days of Dr. Johnson. Mr. La Trobe's statement tends, as far as it goes, to confirm the opinion already, it is hoped, universally entertained, that Johnson's death was truly christian. But Mr. La Trobe had little to tell, and of that little unfortunately the prominent facts are indisputably erroneous. Mr. La Trobe states, that "Dr. Johnson had during his last illness sent every day to know when his father, who was then out of town, would come back. The moment he arrived he went to the doctor's house, but found him speechless, though sensible. Mr. La Trobe addressed to him some religious exhortation, which Johnson showed by pressing his hand, and other signs, that he understood, and was thankful for. He expired the next morning, and Mr. La Trobe always regretted not having been able to attend Dr Johnson sooner, according to his wish." The reader will see that the inference suggested by this statement is, that Dr. Johnson wished for the spiritual assistance of Mr. La Trobe, in addition (or it might even be inferred, in *preference*) to that of his near and dear friends, Mr. Hoole and Dr. Strahan, clergymen of the established church. Now the facts of the case essentially contradict Mr. La Trobe's account, and any inferences which might be deducible from it. Doctor Johnson, as will be seen in the *Diaries* of Sir J. Hawkins and Mr. Windham, was not *speechless* the day before his death, nor did he die next *morning* (which seems mentioned as the reason why Mr. La Trobe's visit was not repeated), but in the *evening*. And, which is quite conclusive, it appears from Mr. Hoole's *Diary*, that Mr. La Trobe's visit to Dr. Johnson's residence (and his son admits there was but *one*) took place about eleven o'clock in the forenoon of the 10th, *three* days before Dr. Johnson's death; that Mr. La Trobe *did not even see him*; and that it was in the course of that very day that Mr. Hoole read prayers to him and a small congregation of friends. So little can anecdotes at second hand be trusted.—ED.]

Romish church, I am happy in this opportunity of recording his friendship with the Reverend Thomas Hussey, D. D.[1], his catholick majesty's chaplain of embassy at the court of London, that very respectable man, eminent not only for his powerful eloquence as a preacher, but for his various abilities and acquisitions. Nay, though Johnson loved a Presbyterian the least of all, this did not prevent his having a long and uninterrupted social connexion with the Reverend Dr. James Fordyce, who, since his death, hath gratefully celebrated him in a warm strain of devotional composition.

Amidst the melancholy clouds which hung over the dying Johnson, his characteristical manner showed itself on different occasions.

When Dr. Warren, in his usual style, hoped that he was better, his answer was, "No, sir; you cannot conceive with what acceleration I advance towards death."

A man whom he had never seen before was employed one night to sit up with him. Being asked next morning how he liked his attendant, his answer was, "Not at all, sir: the fellow 's an idiot; he is as awkward as a turnspit when first put into the wheel, and as sleepy as a dormouse."

He repeated with great spirit a poem, consisting of several stanzas, in four lines, in alternate rhyme, which he said he had composed some years before[2],

[1] [No doubt the gentleman who is so conspicuous in Mr. Cumberland's Memoirs. He was subsequently first master of the Roman Catholic college at Maynooth, and titular bishop of Waterford, in Ireland, in which latter capacity he published, in 1797, a pastoral charge, which excited a good deal of observation. —Ed.]

[2] In 1780. See his letter to Mrs. Thrale, dated August 8th, 1780. "You have heard in the papers how [Lade] is come to age: I have enclosed a short song of congratulation, which you must not show to any body. It is odd that it should come into any body's head. I hope you will read it with candour; it is, I believe, one of the authour's first essays in that way of writing, and a beginner is always to be treated with tenderness."—Malone.

on occasion of a rich, extravagant young gentleman's coming of age[1]: saying he had never repeated it but once since he composed it, and had given but one copy of it. That copy was given to Mrs. Thrale, now Piozzi, who has published it in a book which she entitles "British Synonimy," but which is truly a collection of entertaining remarks and stories, no matter whether accurate or not. Being a piece of exquisite satire, conveyed in a strain of pointed vivacity and humour, and in a manner of which no other instance is to be found in Johnson's writings, I shall here insert it.

"Long-expected one-and-twenty,
Ling'ring year, at length is flown:
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great [Sir John], are now your own.

"Loosen'd from the minor's tether,
Free to mortgage or to sell,
Wild as wind, and light as feather,
Bid the sons of thrift farewell.

"Call the Betseys, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
Show the spirit of an heir.

"All that prey on vice and folly
Joy to see their quarry fly:
There the gamester, light and jolly,
There the lender, grave and sly.

"Wealth, my lad, was made to wander,
Let it wander as it will;
Call the jockey, call the pander,
Bid them come and take their fill.

"When the bonny blade carouses,
Pockets full, and spirits high—
What are acres? what are houses?
Only dirt, or wet or dry.

"Should the guardian friend or mother
Tell the woes of wilful waste:
Scorn their counsels, scorn their pother,
You can hang or drown at last."

As he opened a note which his servant brought to him, he said, "An odd thought strikes me:—we shall receive no letters in the grave[2]."

[1] [Sir John Lade. See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 19.—Ed.]

[2] [Thoughts of the same class had already struck Jeremy Taylor:—"What servants shall we have to wait on us in the grave? What friends to visit us?

He requested three things of Sir Joshua Reynolds:—To forgive him thirty pounds which he had borrowed of him;—to read the Bible;—and never to use his pencil on a Sunday. Sir Joshua readily acquiesced.

Indeed he showed the greatest anxiety for the religious improvement of his friends, to whom he discoursed of its infinite consequence. He begged of Mr. Hoole to think of what he had said, and to commit it to writing; and, upon being afterwards assured that this was done, pressed his hands, and in an earnest tone thanked him. Dr. Brocklesby having attended him with the utmost assiduity and kindness as his physician and friend, he was peculiarly desirous that this gentleman should not entertain any loose speculative notions, but be confirmed in the truths of Christianity, and insisted on his writing down in his presence, as nearly as he could collect it, the import of what passed on the subject: and Dr. Brocklesby having complied with the request, he made him sign the paper, and urged him to keep it in his own custody as long as he lived.

Johnson, with that native fortitude, which, amidst all his bodily distress and mental sufferings, never forsook him, asked Dr. Brocklesby, as a man in whom he had confidence, to tell him plainly whether he could recover. "Give me," said he, "a direct answer." The Doctor having first asked him if he could bear the whole truth, which way soever it might lead, and being answered that he could, declared that, in his opinion, he could not recover without a miracle. "Then," said Johnson, "I will take no more physick, not even my opiates; for I have prayed that I

What officious people to cleanse away the moist and unwholesome cloud reflected on our faces from the sides of the weeping vaults, which are the longest weepers at our funeral!"—*Holy Dying*, chap. i. § 2.—ED.]

may render up my soul to God unclouded[1]." In this resolution he persevered, and, at the same time, used only the weakest kinds of sustenance. Being pressed by Mr. Windham to take somewhat more generous nourishment, lest too low a diet should have the very effect which he dreaded, by debilitating his mind, he said, "I will take any thing but inebriating sustenance."

Mr. Windham having placed a pillow conveniently to support him, he thanked him for his kindness, and said, "That will do,—all that a pillow can do."

[The following extract[2] from a private journal kept by Mr. Windham will be read with interest.

"Tuesday, December 7, 1784.
Ten minutes past 2, P.M.

Wind. MSS. "After waiting some short time in the adjoining room, I was admitted to Dr. Johnson in his bedchamber, where, after placing me next him in the chair (he sitting in his usual place, on the east side of the room, and I on his right hand), he put into my hands two small volumes (an edition of the New Virg. Ecl. viii. Testament, as he afterwards told me), saying, 'Extremum hoc munus morientis habeto.'

"He then proceeded to observe that I was entering

[1] [The following is an instance of a similar spirit:—"Maria Theresa, queen of Hungary and Bohemia, who died about 1780, was a woman of great strength of mind, united with other estimable qualities. A short time before her death, one of the ladies near her person, in reply to an inquiry made respecting the state of the empress, answered, that her majesty seemed to be asleep. 'No,' replied she, 'I could sleep if I would indulge repose, but I am sensible of the near approach of death, and I will not allow myself to be surprised by him in my sleep. *I wish to meet my dissolution awake.*' There is nothing transmitted to us by antiquity finer than this answer, which is divested of all ostentation."—*Wraxall's Historical Memoirs of his own Time*, vol. i. p. 365.—MARKLAND.]

[2] [Understanding that a journal kept by the late Mr. Windham contained some particulars relative to Dr. Johnson, the editor applied to his friend, Admiral Windham, that gentleman's nephew and heir, for permission to see the journal, which the admiral most readily granted; but a gentleman to whose care the papers had been previously consigned with a view to his writing a life of Mr. Windham, declined to favour the editor with the desired information. From another quarter, however, he is enabled to present the reader with this extract made from the original journal before it had received its present destination.—ED.]

upon a life which would lead me deeply into all the business of the world: that he did not condemn civil employment, but that it was a state of great danger, and that he had therefore one piece of advice earnestly to impress upon me, that I would set apart every seventh day for the care of my soul. That one day, the seventh, should be employed in repenting what was amiss in the six preceding, and fortifying my virtue for the six to come. That such a portion of time was surely little enough for the meditation of eternity. Wind. MSS.

"He then told me that he had a request to make to me, namely, that I would allow his servant Frank to look up to me as his friend, adviser, and protector, in all difficulties which his own weakness and imprudence, or the force or fraud of others, might bring him into. He said that he had left him what he considered an ample provision, viz. seventy pounds per annum; but that even that sum might not place him above the want of a protector, and to me, therefore, he recommended him as to one who had will, and power, and activity to protect him. Having obtained my assent to this, he proposed that Frank should be called in; and desiring me to take him by the hand in token of the promise, repeated before him the recommendation he had just made of him, and the promise I had given to attend to it.

"I then took occasion to say how much I felt—what I had long foreseen that I should feel—regret at having spent so little of my life in his company. I stated this as an instance where resolutions are deferred till the occasions are past. For some time past I had determined that such an occasion of self-reproach should not subsist, and had built upon the hope of passing in his society the chief part of my time, at the moment when it was to be apprehended we were about to lose him for ever.

Wind. MSS. "I had no difficulty in speaking to him thus of my apprehensions. I could not help, on the other hand, entertaining hopes, but with these I did not like to trouble him, lest he should conceive that I thought it necessary to flatter him: he answered hastily, that he was sure I would not; and proceeded to make a compliment to the manliness of my mind, which, whether deserved or not, ought to be remembered, that it may be deserved.

"I then stated, that among other neglects was the omission of introducing of all topics the most important, the consequence of which particularly filled my mind at that moment, and in which I had often been desirous to know his opinions; the subjects I meant were, I said, natural and revealed religion. The wish thus generally stated was in part gratified on the instant. For revealed religion, he said, there was such historical evidence, as upon any subject not religious would have left no doubt. Had the facts recorded in the New Testament been mere civil occurrences, no one would have called in question the testimony by which they are established; but the importance annexed to them, amounting to nothing less than the salvation of mankind, raised a cloud in our minds, and created doubts unknown upon any other subject. Of proofs to be derived from history, one of the most cogent, he seemed to think, was the opinion so well authenticated, and so long entertained, of a deliverer that was to appear about that time. Among the typical representations, the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, in which no bone was to be broken, had early struck his mind. For the immediate life and miracles of Christ, such attestation as that of the apostles, who all, except St. John, confirmed their testimony with their blood—such belief as these witnesses procured from a people best furnished with the means of judging, and least disposed to judge favourably—such

an extension afterwards of that belief over all the nations of the earth, though originating from a nation of all others most despised, would leave no doubt that the things witnessed were true; and were of a nature more than human. With respect to evidence, Dr. Johnson observed, that we had not such evidence that Cæsar died in the Capitol, as that Christ died in the manner related. Wind. MSS.

"December 11th.—Went with Sir Joshua, whom I took up by the way, to see Dr. Johnson. Strahan and Langton there. No hopes; though a great discharge had taken place from the legs.

"December 12th.—At about half-past seven P. M. went to Dr. Johnson's, where I stayed, chiefly in the outer room, till past eleven. Strahan there during the whole time; during part Mr. Hoole; and latterly Mr. Cruikshanks and the apothecary. I only went in twice, for a few minutes each time: the first time I hinted only what they had before been urging, namely, that he would be prevailed upon to take some sustenance, and desisted upon his exclaiming, 'Tis all very childish; let us hear no more of it.' The second time I came in, in consequence of a consultation with Mr. Cruikshanks and the apothecary, and addressed him formally, after premising, that I considered what I was going to say as matter of duty: I said that I hoped he would not suspect me of the weakness of importuning him to take nourishment for the purpose of prolonging his life for a few hours or days. I then stated what the reason was. It was to secure that which I was persuaded that he was most anxious about, namely, that he might preserve his faculties entire to the last moment. Before I had quite stated my meaning, he interrupted me by saying, that he had refused no sustenance but inebriating sustenance; and proceeded to give instances where, in compliance with

Wind. MSS. the wishes of his physician, he had taken even a small quantity of wine. I readily assented to any objections he might have to nourishment of that kind, and observing that milk was the only nourishment I intended, flattered myself that I had succeeded in my endeavours, when he recurred to his general refusal, and 'begged that there might be an end of it.' I then said, that I hoped he would forgive my earnestness, or something to that effect, when he replied eagerly, that from me nothing could be necessary by way of apology; adding, with great fervour, in words which I shall, I hope, never forget, 'God bless you, my dear Windham, through Jesus Christ;' and concluding with a wish 'that we might [share] in some humble portion of that happiness which God might finally vouchsafe to repentant sinners.' These were the last words I ever heard him speak. I hurried out of the room with tears in my eyes, and more affected than I had been on any former occasion.

"December 13th.—In the morning meant to have met Mr. Cruikshanks in Bolt Court, but while I was deliberating about going, was sent for by Mr. Burke. Went to Bolt Court about half-past three, found that Dr. Johnson had been almost constantly asleep since nine in the morning, and heard from Mr. Desmoulins what passed in the night. He had compelled Frank to give him a lancet, and had besides concealed in the bed a pair of scissors, and, with one or the other of them, had scarified himself in three places, two of them in the leg. On Mr. Desmoulins making a difficulty in giving him the lancet, he said, 'Don't, if you have any scruple; but I will compel Frank:' and on Mr. Desmoulins attempting afterwards to prevent Frank from giving it to him, and at last to restrain his hand, he grew very outrageous, so as to call Frank scoundrel, and to threaten Mr. Desmou-

lins that he would stab him[1]; he then made the three incisions above mentioned, two of which were not unskilfully made; but one of those in the leg was a deep and ugly wound, from which they suppose him to have lost at least eight ounces of blood. Wind. MSS.

"Upon Dr. Heberden expressing his fears about the scarification, Dr. Johnson told him he was *timidorum timidissimus*. A few days before his death, talking with Dr. Brocklesby, he said, 'Now will you ascribe my death to my having taken eight grains of squills when you recommended only three? Dr. Heberden, to my having opened my left foot when nature was pointing out the discharge in the right?' The conversation was introduced by his quoting some lines, to the same purpose, from Swift's verses on his own death[2].

"It was within the same period, if I understood Dr. Brocklesby right, that he enjoined him, as an honest man and a physician, to inform him how long he thought he had to live. Dr. Brocklesby inquired, in return, whether he had firmness to bear the answer. Upon his replying that he had, and Dr.

[1] [See *ante*, p. 314. The reader will judge whether Boswell's or Hawkins's account of this transaction is the juster; but that more importance may not be given to it than it deserves, it must be recollected, that Johnson fancied that his attendants were treating him with a timid leniency, merely to spare him pain, a notion which irritated, at once, his love of life, his animal courage, and his high moral principle. We have already seen (*ante*, p. 227) that when in health he had said, *whoever is afraid of any thing is a scoundrel*, and now in the same feeling, and the same words, he censures the cowardly, as he thought them, apprehensions of his attendants. It might be wished, that in such circumstances he had spoken and acted with less impatience; but let us not forget the excuses which may be drawn from the natural infirmity of his temper, exasperated by the peevishness of a long and painful disease.—ED.]

[2] ["The doctors, tender of their fame,
Wisely on one lay all the blame:
'We must confess his case was nice,
But he would never take advice;
Had he been ruled, for aught appears,
He might have lived these twenty years;
For when we open'd him, we found
That all his vital parts were sound.' "—ED.]

Wind. MSS. Brocklesby limiting the time to a few weeks, he said, 'that he then would trouble himself no more with medicine or medical advice:' and to this resolution he pretty much adhered.

"In a conversation about what was practicable in medicine or surgery, he quoted, to the surprise of his physicians, the opinion of Marchetti for an operation of extracting (I think) part of the kidney. He recommended, for an account of China, Sir John Mandeville's Travels. Halliday's Notes on Juvenal he thought so highly of as to have employed himself for some time in translating them into Latin.

"He insisted on the doctrine of an expiatory sacrifice as the condition without which there was no Christianity[1]; and urged in support the belief entertained in all ages, and by all nations, barbarous as well as polite. He recommended to Dr. Brocklesby, also, Clarke's Sermons, and repeated to him the passage which he had spoken of to me.

"While airing one day with Dr. Brocklesby, in passing and returning by St. Pancras church, he fell into prayer, and mentioned, upon Dr. Brocklesby's inquiring, why the Catholics chose that for their burying-place, that some Catholics, in Queen Elizabeth's time, had been burnt there[2]. Upon Dr. Brocklesby's asking him whether he did not feel the warmth of the sun, he quoted from Juvenal,

'Præterea minimus gelido jam in corpore sanguis
Febre calet solâ.'[3]——

[1] [This confirms the editor's opinion, *ante*, vol. iv. p. 41.—Ed.]

[2] [The reader will be aware that *other* causes have been assigned for this preference, but I learn, from unquestionable authority, that it rests upon no foundation, and that mere *prejudice* exists amongst the Roman Catholics in favour of this church, as is the case with respect to other places of burial in various parts of the kingdom.—Markland.]

[3] [*Ante*, p. 272.—Ed.]

"December 13th.—Forty-five minutes past ten P. M. While writing the preceding articles, I received the fatal account, so long dreaded, that Dr. Johnson was no more! Wind. MSS.

"May those prayers which he incessantly poured from a heart fraught with the deepest devotion find their acceptance with Him to whom they were addressed; which piety, so humble and so fervent, may seem to promise!"]

[The following Journal, by Sir J. Hawkins, of the last fortnight of Dr. Johnson's life, though it must necessarily repeat some facts already stated, cannot be either omitted or curtailed. Ed.

"Sunday 28th. I saw him about noon; he was dozing; but waking, he found himself in a circle of his friends. Upon opening his eyes, he said that the prospect of his dissolution was very terrible to him, and addressed himself to us all, in nearly these words: 'You see the state in which I am; conflicting with bodily pain and mental distraction: while you are in health and strength, labour to do good, and avoid evil, if ever you hope to escape the distress that now oppresses me.' A little while after, 'I had very early in my life the seeds of goodness in me: I had a love of virtue, and a reverence for religion; and these, I trust, have brought forth in me fruits meet for repentance[1]; and if I have repented as I ought, I am forgiven. I have, at times, entertained a loathing of sin and of myself, particularly at the beginning of this year, when I had the prospect of death before me; and this has not abated when my fears of death have been less; and, at these times, I have had such rays of hope shot into my soul, as have almost persuaded me that I am in a state of reconciliation with God.' Hawk. p. 583.

[1] ["Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance."—*St. Luke*, chap. iii. v. 8.—Ed.]

Hawk. p. 584.

"29th. Mr. Langton, who had spent the evening with him, reported, that his hopes were increased, and that he was much cheered upon being reminded of the general tendency of his writings, and of his example.

"30th. I saw him in the evening, and found him cheerful. Was informed that he had, for his dinner, eaten heartily of a French duck pie and a pheasant.

"Dec. 1. He was busied in destroying papers. Gave to Mr. Langton and another person[1], to fair copy, some translations of the Greek epigrams, which he had made in the preceding nights, and transcribed the next morning, and they began to work on them.

"3d. Finding his legs continue to swell, he signified to his physicians a strong desire to have them scarified, but they, unwilling to put him to pain, and fearing a mortification, declined advising it. He afterwards consulted his surgeon, and he performed the operation on one leg.

"4th. I visited him: the scarification made yesterday in his leg appeared to have had little effect. He said to me, that he was easier in his mind, and as fit to die at that instant as he could be a year hence. He requested me to receive the sacrament with him on Sunday, the next day. Complained of great weakness, and of phantoms that haunted his imagination.

"5th. Being Sunday, I *communicated* with him and Mr. Langton, and other of his friends, as many as nearly filled the room. Mr. Strahan, who was constant in his attendance on him throughout his illness, performed the office. Previous to reading the exhortation, Johnson knelt, and, with a degree of fervour that I had never been witness to before,

[1] [Young Mr. Desmoulins.—Ed.]

uttered the following most eloquent and energetic prayer: Hawk. p. 584.

"'Almighty, and most merciful Father, I am now, as to human eyes it seems, about to commemorate, for the last time, the death of thy son Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. Grant, O Lord, that my whole hope and confidence may be in his merits and in thy mercy: forgive and accept my late conversion; enforce and accept my imperfect repentance; make this commemoration of him available to the confirmation of my faith, the establishment of my hope, and the enlargement of my charity; and make the death of thy son Jesus effectual to my redemption. Have mercy upon me, and pardon the multitude of my offences. Bless my friends, have mercy upon all men. Support me by the grace of thy holy spirit in the days of weakness, and at the hour of death, and receive me, at my death, to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ.—Amen[1].'

"Upon rising from his knees, after the office was concluded, he said, that he dreaded to meet God in a state of idiocy, or with opium in his head; and that having now communicated with the effects of a dose upon him, he doubted if his exertions were the genuine operations of his mind, and repeated from bishop Taylor this sentiment, 'That little that has been omitted in health can be done to any purpose in sickness.' p. 585.

"He very much admired, and often in the course of his illness recited, from the conclusion of old Isaac Walton's life of Bishop Sanderson, the following

[1] [Mr. Boswell in quoting this prayer, which was preserved by Mr. Strahan and inserted in his publication, introduces it with the following words: "Johnson having thus in his mind the true Christian scheme, at once rational and consolatory, uniting justice and mercy in the Divinity, and the improvement of human nature, previous to his receiving the Holy Sacrament in his apartment, composed and fervently uttered this prayer;" and follows it with an account of Dr. Johnson's dissolution, which, to prevent tautology in the text and yet to preserve every word of Mr. Boswell's work, the editor subjoins here. "Having, as has been already mentioned, made his will on the 8th and 9th of December, and settled all his worldly affairs, he languished till Monday, the 13th of that month, when he expired, about seven o'clock in the evening, with so little apparent pain, that his attendants hardly perceived when his dissolution took place." These two passages and the prayer occupy the space in the original edition which in this is taken up with Hawkins's diary.—Ed.]

Hawk. p. 586. pathetick request: 'Thus this pattern of meekness and primitive innocence changed this for a better life:—'tis now too late to wish that mine may be like his; for I am in the eighty-fifth year of my age, and God knows it hath not; but, I most humbly beseech Almighty God, that my death may; and I do as earnestly beg, that if any reader shall receive any satisfaction from this very plain, and, as true relation, he will be so charitable as to say, Amen.'

"While he was dressing and preparing for this solemnity, an accident happened which went very near to disarrange his mind. He had mislaid, and was very anxious to find a paper that contained private instructions to his executors; and myself, Mr. Strahan, Mr. Langton, Mr. Hoole, Frank, and I believe some others that were about him, went into his bed-chamber to seek it. In our search, I laid my hands on a parchment-covered book, into which I imagined it might have been slipped. Upon opening the book, I found it to be meditations and reflections, in Johnson's own hand-writing; and having been told a day or two before by Frank, that a person[1] formerly intimately connected with his master, a joint proprietor of a newspaper, well known among the booksellers, and of whom Mrs. Williams once told me she had often cautioned him to beware; I say, having been told that this person had lately been very importunate to get access to him, indeed to such a degree as that, when he was told that the doctor was not to be seen, he would push his way up stairs; and having stronger reasons than I need here mention to suspect that this man might find and make an ill use of the book, I put it, and a less of the same kind, into my pocket; at the same time

[1] [Mr. George Steevens. See *ante*, p. 316.—Ed.]

telling those around me, and particularly Mr. Langton and Mr. Strahan, that I had got both, with my reasons for thus securing them. After the ceremony was over, Johnson took me aside, and told me that I had a book of his in my pocket; I answered that I had two, and that to prevent their falling into the hands of a person who had attempted to force his way into the house, I had done as I conceived a friendly act, but not without telling his friends of it, and also my reasons. He then asked me what ground I had for my suspicion of the man I mentioned: I told him his great importunity to get admittance; and farther, that immediately after a visit which he made me, in the year 1775, I missed a paper of a public nature, and of great importance; and that a day or two after, and before it could be put to its intended use, I saw it in the newspapers[1]. Hawk. p. 587.

"At the mention of this circumstance, Johnson paused; but recovering himself, said, 'You should not have laid hands on the book; for had I missed it, and not known you had it, I should have roared for my book, as Othello did for his handkerchief, and probably have run mad.'

"I gave him time, till the next day, to compose himself, and then wrote him a letter, apologizing, and assigning at large the reasons for my conduct; and received a verbal answer by Mr. Langton, which,

[1] "As I take no pleasure in the disgrace of others, I regret the necessity I am under of mentioning these particulars: my reason for it is, that the transaction which so disturbed him may possibly be better known than the motives that actuated me at the time."—HAWKINS. [Miss Hawkins's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 264, tells this story in the same way, supplies Steevens's name, and insists on the same justification, which would be quite inconclusive, even if the fact on which the suspicion against Steevens was grounded were true, for the purloined paper was only a copy of an address from the Middlesex magistrates to the king (which was, from its very nature, destined for publication). And after all, there was no other proof that Steevens had taken this paper than that it appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle* the day after Steevens had made a visit at Sir John's. Hawkins's act was unjustifiable, and the defence frivolous. It is observable, that there was no allusion to these circumstances in the *first edition* of Hawkins's work —ED.]

Hawk. p. 588. were I to repeat it, would render me suspected of inexcusable vanity[1]; it concluded with these words, 'If I was not satisfied with this, I must be a savage.'

"7th. I again visited him. Before my departure, Dr. Brocklesby came in, and, taking him by the wrist, Johnson gave him a look of great contempt, and ridiculed the judging of his disorder by the pulse. He complained that the sarcocele had again made its appearance, and asked if a puncture would not relieve him, as it had done the year before; the doctor answered that it might, but that his surgeon was the best judge of the effect of such an operation. Johnson, upon this, said, 'How many men in a year die through the timidity of those whom they consult for health! I want length of life, and you fear giving me pain, which I care not for.'

"8th. I visited him with Mr. Langton, and found him dictating to Mr. Strahan another will[2], the former being, as he had said at the time of making it, a temporary one. On our entering the room, he said, 'God bless you both.' I arrived just time enough to direct the execution, and also the attestation of it. After he had published it, he desired Mr. Strahan to say the Lord's prayer, which he did, all of us joining. Johnson, after it, uttered, extempore, a few pious ejaculations.

"9th. I saw him in the evening, and found him dictating, to Mr. Strahan, a codicil to the will he had made the evening before. I assisted them in it, and received from the testator a direction, to insert a devise

[1] [See *ante*, p. 316. *n.*—ED.]

[2] [There seems something odd in this affair of the will. Why did Johnson, after employing Sir J. Hawkins, a professional and in every other respect a proper person to draw up his will, throw it aside, and dictate another to a young clergyman? Had Sir J. Hawkins attempted to thwart the testator's intentions, which he tells us he disapproved of: or was this change the result of the scene of the 5th about the *secreted* books? In any case, it may have tended to produce that unfavourable temper towards Dr. Johnson which tinges the whole, and certainly discolours some passages of Sir J. Hawkins's book.—ED.]

to his executors of the house at Lichfield, to be sold for the benefit of certain of his relations, a bequest of sundry pecuniary and specific legacies, a provision for the annuity of 70*l.* for Francis, and, after all, a devise of all the rest, residue, and remainder of his estate and effects, to his executors, in trust for the said Francis Barber, his executors and administrators; and having dictated accordingly, Johnson executed and published it as a codicil to his will[1]. Hawk. p. 589.

"He was now so weak as to be unable to kneel, and lamented that he must pray sitting, but, with an effort, he placed himself on his knees, while Mr. Strahan repeated the Lord's Prayer. During the whole of the evening, he was much composed and resigned. Being become very weak and helpless, it was thought necessary that a man should watch with him all night; and one was found in the neighbourhood, who, for half a crown a night, undertook to sit up with and assist him. When the man had left the room, he, in the presence and hearing of Mr. Strahan and Mr. Langton, asked me where I meant

[1] "How much soever I approve of the practice of rewarding the fidelity of servants, I cannot but think that, in testamentary dispositions in their favour, some discretion ought to be exercised; and that in scarce any instance they are to be preferred to those who are allied to the testator either in blood or by affinity. Of the merits of this servant, a judgment may be formed from what I shall hereafter have occasion to say of him. It was hinted to me many years ago, by his master, that he was a loose fellow; and I learned from others, that, after an absence from his service of some years, he married. In his search of a wife, he picked up one of those creatures with whom, in the disposal of themselves, no contrariety of colour is an obstacle. It is said, that soon after his marriage he became jealous, and, it may be supposed, that he continued so, till, by presenting him with a daughter of her own colour, his wife put an end to all his doubts on that score. Notwithstanding which, Johnson, in the excess of indiscriminating benevolence, about a year before his death, took the wife and her two children into his house, and made them a part of his family; and, by the codicil to his will, made a disposition in his favour, to the amount in value of near fifteen hundred pounds."—HAWKINS. [Several small causes contributed to make Sir J. Hawkins dislike Barber; who, in the kind of feud and rivalry between Sir John and Mr. Boswell, sided with the latter, and communicated to him the papers to which he, as residuary legatee, became entitled. It is painful to see in a man of Sir J. Hawkins's station, such rancour as prompted the imputation made in the foregoing note against the poor woman, Barber's wife, whose moral conduct, whatever it may have been, had surely nothing to do with Sir John Hawkins's squabbles with her husband.—ED.]

Hawk. p. 390. to bury him. I answered, doubtless, in Westminster abbey; 'If,' said he, 'my executors think it proper to mark the spot of my interment by a stone, let it be so placed as to protect my body from injury.' I assured him it should be done. Before my departure, he desired Mr. Langton to put into my hands money to the amount of upwards of 100*l.* with a direction to keep it till called for.

"10th. This day at noon I saw him again. He said to me, that the male nurse to whose care I had committed him was unfit for the office. 'He is,' said he, 'an idiot, as awkward as a turnspit just put into the wheel, and as sleepy as a dormouse.' Mr. Cruikshank came into the room, and looking on his scarified leg, saw no sign of a mortification.

"11th. At noon, I found him dozing, and would not disturb him.

"12th. Saw him again; found him very weak, and, as he said, unable to pray.

"13th. At noon I called at the house, but went not into his room, being told that he was dozing. I was further informed by the servants, that his appetite was totally gone, and that he could take no sustenance. At eight in the evening of the same day, word was brought me by Mr. Sastres, to whom, in his last moments, he uttered these words, 'Jam moriturus,' that at a quarter past seven, he had, without a groan, or the least sign of pain or uneasiness, yielded his last breath.

"At eleven, the same evening, Mr. Langton came to me, and, in an agony of mind, gave me to understand, that our friend had wounded himself in several parts of the body. I was shocked at the news; but, upon being told that he had not touched any vital part, was easily able to account for an action, which would else have given us the deepest concern.

The fact was, that conceiving himself to be full of water, he had done that, which he had often solicited his medical assistants to do, made two or three incisions in his lower limbs, vainly hoping for some relief from the flux that might follow. Hawk. p. 591.

"Early the next morning, Frank came to me; and, being desirous of knowing all the particulars of this transaction, I interrogated him very strictly concerning it, and received from him answers to the following effect:

"That, at eight in the morning of the preceding day, upon going into the bedchamber, his master, being in bed, ordered him to open a cabinet, and give him a drawer in it; that he did so, and that out of it his master took a case of lancets, and choosing one of them, would have conveyed it into the bed, which Frank and a young man that sat up with him seeing, they seized his hand, and entreated him not to do a rash action: he said he would not; but drawing his hand under the bed-clothes, they saw his arm move. Upon this they turned down the clothes, and saw a great effusion of blood, which soon stopped; that soon after, he got at a pair of scissors that lay in a drawer by him, and plunged them deep in the calf of each leg; that immediately they sent for Mr. Cruikshank and the apothecary, and they, or one of them, dressed the wounds; that he then fell into that dozing which carried him off; that it was conjectured he lost eight or ten ounces of blood; and that this effusion brought on the dozing, though his pulse continued firm till three o'clock.

"That this act was not done to hasten[1] his end,

[1] [The clumsy solemnity with which Hawkins thinks it necessary to defend Dr. Johnson from the suspicion of endeavouring to *shorten* his life by an act manifestly, avowedly, and even passionately meant to *prolong* it, is certainly

Hawk. p. 592.

but to discharge the water that he conceived to be in him, I have not the least doubt. A dropsy was his disease; he looked upon himself as a bloated carcass; and, to attain the power of easy respiration, would have undergone any degree of temporary pain. He dreaded neither punctures nor incisions, and, indeed, defied the trochar and the lancet; he had often reproached his physicians and surgeon with cowardice: and when Mr. Cruikshank scarified his leg, he cried out, 'Deeper, deeper; I will abide the consequence: you are afraid of your reputation, but that is nothing to me.' To those about him he said, 'You all pretend to love me, but you do not love me so well as I myself do.'

"I have been thus minute in recording the particulars of his last moments, because I wished to attract attention to the conduct of this great man, under the most trying circumstances human nature is subject to. Many persons have appeared possessed of more serenity of mind in this awful scene; some have remained unmoved at the dissolution of the vital union; and it may be deemed a discouragement from the severe practice of religion, that Dr. Johnson, whose whole life was a preparation for his death, and a conflict with natural infirmity, was disturbed with terror at the prospect of the grave[1]. Let not this relax the circumspection of any one. It is true, that natural firmness of spirit, or the confidence of hope, may buoy up the mind to the last; but, how-

very offensive; but it hardly, the editor thinks, justifies Mr. Boswell's suspicions (*ante*, p. 313. *n.*) that there was some malevolence at the bottom of the defence.—ED.]

[1] [Hawkins seems to confound two different periods. At the first appearance of danger, Dr. Johnson exhibited great, and perhaps gloomy anxiety, which, however, under the gradual effect of religious contemplations and devotional exercises, gave way to more comfortable hopes suggested by a lively faith in the propitiatory merits of his Redeemer. In this tranquillizing disposition the last days of his life seem to have been passed, and in this christian confidence it is believed that he died.—ED.]

ever heroic an undaunted death may appear, it is not what we should pray for. As Johnson lived the life of the righteous, his end was that of a Christian; he strictly fulfilled the injunction of the apostle, to work out his salvation with fear and trembling; and though his doubts and scruples were certainly very distressing to himself, they give his friends a pious hope, that he, who added to almost all the virtues of christianity, that religious humility which its great teacher inculcated, will, in the fulness of time, receive the reward promised to a patient continuance in well-doing."]

Of his last moments, my brother[1], Thomas David, has furnished me with the following particulars:

"The doctor, from the time that he was certain his death was near, appeared to be perfectly resigned, was seldom or never fretful or out of temper, and often said to his faithful servant, who gave me this account, 'Attend, Francis, to the salvation of your soul, which is the object of greatest importance:' he also explained to him passages in the scripture, and seemed to have pleasure in talking upon religious subjects.

"On Monday, the 13th of December, the day on which he died, a Miss Morris[2], daughter to a particular friend of his, called, and said to Francis, that she begged to be permitted to see the doctor, that she might earnestly request him to give her his blessing. Francis went into the room, followed by the young lady, and delivered the message. The doctor turned himself in the bed, and said, 'God

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 321.—Ed.]

[2] [She was the sister of a lady of the same name who appeared on the stage at Covent-garden as Juliet, in 1768, and died next year. She was a relation of Mr. Corbyn Morris, commissioner of the customs.—*European Magazine*, Sept. 1799, p. 158.—Ed.]

bless you, my dear!' These were the last words he spoke. His difficulty of breathing increased till about seven o'clock in the evening, when Mr. Barber and Mrs. Desmoulins, who were sitting in the room, observing that the noise he made in breathing had ceased, went to the bed, and found he was dead."

ED. [The following letter, written with an agitated hand, from the very chamber of death, by the amiable Mr. Langton, and obviously interrupted by his feelings, will not unaptly close the story of so long a friendship. The letter is not addressed, but Mr. Langton's family believe it was intended for Mr. Boswell.

MS. MY DEAR SIR,—After many conflicting hopes and fears respecting the event of this heavy return of illness which has assailed our honoured friend, Dr. Johnson, since his arrival from Lichfield, about four days ago the appearances grew more and more awful, and this afternoon at eight o'clock, when I arrived at his house to see how he should be going on, I was acquainted at the door, that about three quarters of an hour before, he had breathed his last. I am now writing in the room where his venerable remains exhibit a spectacle, the interesting solemnity of which, difficult as it would be in any sort to find terms to express, so to you, my dear sir, whose own sensations will paint it so strongly, it would be of all men the most superfluous to attempt to ———.]

The Reverend Mr. Strahan, who was the son of his friend, and had been always one of his great favourites, had, during his last illness, the satisfaction of contributing to soothe and comfort him. That gentleman's house at Islington, of which he is vicar, afforded Johnson, occasionally and easily, an agreeable change of place and fresh air; and he attended also upon him in town in the discharge of the sacred offices of his profession.

Mr. Strahan has given me the agreeable assurance,

that after being in much agitation, Johnson became quite composed, and continued so till his death.

Dr. Brocklesby, who will not be suspected of fanaticism, obliged me with the following accounts:

"For some time before his death, all his fears were calmed and absorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his trust in the merits and *propitiation* of Jesus Christ.

"He talked often to me about the necessity of faith in the *sacrifice* of Jesus, as necessary beyond all good works whatever for the salvation of mankind.

"He pressed me to study Dr. Clarke and to read his sermons. I asked him why he pressed Dr. Clarke, an Arian[1]. 'Because,' said he, 'he is fullest on the *propitiatory sacrifice*.'"

About two days after his death, the following very agreeable account was communicated to Mr. Malone, in a letter by the Honourable John Byng, to whom I am much obliged for granting me permission to introduce it in my work.

"DEAR SIR,—Since I saw you, I have had a long conversation with Cawston[2], who sat up with Dr. Johnson, from nine o'clock on Sunday evening, till ten o'clock on Monday morning. And, from what I can gather from him, it should seem, that Dr. Johnson was perfectly composed, steady in hope, and resigned to death. At the interval of each hour, they assisted him to sit up in his bed, and move his legs, which were in much pain; when he regularly addressed himself to fervent prayer; and

[1] The change of his sentiments with regard to Dr. Clarke is thus mentioned to me in a letter from the late Dr. Adams, master of Pembroke college, Oxford. —"The doctor's prejudices were the strongest, and certainly in another sense the weakest, that ever possessed a sensible man. You know his extreme zeal for orthodoxy. But did you ever hear what he told me himself? that he had made it a rule not to admit Dr. Clarke's name in his Dictionary. This, however, wore off. At some distance of time he advised with me what books he should read in defence of the christian religion. I recommended 'Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion,' as the best of the kind; and I find in what is called his 'Prayers and Meditations,' that he was frequently employed in the latter part of his time in reading Clarke's Sermons."—BOSWELL.

[2] Servant to the Right Honourable William Windham.—BOSWELL.

though, sometimes, his voice failed him, his sense never did, during that time. The only sustenance he received was cyder and water. He said his mind was prepared, and the time to his dissolution seemed long. At six in the morning, he inquired the hour, and, on being informed, said, that all went on regularly, and he felt he had but a few hours to live.

"At ten o'clock in the morning, he parted from Cawston, saying, 'You should not detain Mr. Windham's servant:—I thank you; bear my remembrance to your master.' Cawston says, that no man could appear more collected, more devout, or less terrified at the thoughts of the approaching minute.

"This account, which is so much more agreeable than, and somewhat different from, yours, has given us the satisfaction of thinking that that great man died as he lived, full of resignation, strengthened in faith, and joyful in hope[1]."

After making one will, which, as Sir John Hawkins informs us, extended no further than the promised annuity[2], Johnson's final disposition of his property was established by a will and codicil, of which copies are subjoined.

"In the name of God. Amen. I, Samuel Johnson, being in full possession of my faculties, but fearing this night may put an end to my life, do ordain this my last will and testament. I bequeath to God a soul polluted by many sins, but I hope purified by Jesus Christ. I leave seven hundred and fifty pounds in the hands of Bennet Langton, Esq.; three hundred pounds in the hands of Mr. Barclay and Mr. Perkins, brewers; one hundred and fifty pounds in the hands of Dr. Percy, bishop of Dromore[3]; one thousand pounds, three per cent. annuities in the publick funds; and one hundred pounds now lying by me in ready money: all these before-mentioned sums and property I leave, I say, to Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, of Doctor's Commons, in trust, for the

[1] [The quantity of evidence now brought together as to the state of Dr. Johnson's mind with regard to religion in general, and his own salvation in particular, dispenses the editor from making any observations on the subject; but those who may wish to see a commentary on the facts, may turn to the remarks in the Christian Observer for October and November, 1827.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, p. 299.—Ed.]

[3] [The following receipt, all in Johnson's writing, was found in Doctor Percy's papers by Mr. Shaw Mason.

"Memorandum.—I have received one year's interest of one hundred and fifty pounds lent in —— to Dr. Percy.

"April 26, 1782." "Sam. Johnson."—Ed.]

following uses:—That is to say, to pay to the representatives of the late William Innys, bookseller, in St. Paul's Church-yard, the sum of two hundred pounds; to Mrs. White, my female servant, one hundred pounds stock in the three per cent. annuities aforesaid. The rest of the aforesaid sums of money and property, together with my books, plate, and household furniture, I leave to the before-mentioned Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, also in trust, to be applied, after paying my debts, to the use of Francis Barber, my man-servant, a negro, in such manner as they shall judge most fit and available to his benefit. And I appoint the aforesaid Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, sole executors of this my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former wills and testaments whatever. In witness whereof I hereunto subscribe my name, and affix my seal, this eighth day of December, 1784.

"SAM. JOHNSON, (L.S.)

"Signed, sealed, published, declared, and delivered, by the said testator, as his last will and testament, in the presence of us, the word *two* being first inserted in the opposite page.

"GEORGE STRAHAN.
"JOHN DESMOULINS."

"By way of codicil to my last will and testament, I, Samuel Johnson, give, devise, and bequeath, my messuage or tenement situate at Lichfield, in the county of Stafford, with the appurtenances in the tenure and occupation of Mrs. Bond, of Lichfield, aforesaid, or of Mr. Hinchman, her under-tenant, to my executors, in trust, to sell and dispose of the same; and the money arising from such sale I give and bequeath as follows, viz. to Thomas and Benjamin, the sons of Fisher Johnson, late of Leicester, and ——— Whiting, daughter of Thomas Johnson, late of Coventry, and the grand-daughter of the said Thomas Johnson, one full and equal fourth part each; but in case there shall be more grand-daughters than one of the said Thomas Johnson, living at the time of my decease, I give and bequeath the part or share of that one to and equally between such grand-daughters. I give and bequeath to the Rev. Mr. Rogers, of Berkley, near Froom, in the county of Somerset, the sum of one hundred pounds, requesting him to apply the same towards the maintenance of Elizabeth Herne, a lunatick. I also give and bequeath to my god-children, the son and daughter of Mauritius Lowe, painter, each of them one hundred pounds of

my stock in the three per cent. consolidated annuities, to be applied and disposed of by and at the discretion of my executors, in the education or settlement in the world of them my said legatees. Also I give and bequeath to Sir John Hawkins, one of my executors, the Annales Ecclesiastici of Baronius, and Holinshead's and Stowe's Chronicles, and also an octavo Common Prayer-Book. To Bennet Langton, Esq. I give and bequeath my Polyglot Bible. To Sir Joshua Reynolds, my great French Dictionary, by Martiniere, and my own copy of my folio English Dictionary, of the last revision. To Dr. William Scott, one of my executors, the Dictionnaire de Commerce, and Lectius's edition of the Greek Poets[1]. To Mr. Windham, Poetæ Græci Heroici per Henricum Stephanum. To the Rev. Mr. Strahan, vicar of Islington, in Middlesex, Mill's Greek Testament, Beza's Greek Testament, by Stephens, all my Latin Bibles, and my Greek Bible, by Wechelius. To Dr. Heberden, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Butter, and Mr. Cruikshank, the surgeon who attended me, Mr. Holder, my apothecary, Gerard Hamilton, Esq. Mrs. Gardiner, of Snow-hill, Mrs. Frances Reynolds, Mr. Hoole, and the Reverend Mr. Hoole, his son, each a book at their election, to keep as a token of remembrance. I also give and bequeath to Mr. John Desmoulins, two hundred pounds consolidated three per cent. annuities; and to Mr. Sastres, the Italian master, the sum of five pounds, to be laid out in books of piety for his own use. And whereas the said Bennet Langton hath agreed, in consideration of the sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds, mentioned in my will to be in his hands, to grant and secure an annuity of seventy pounds payable during the life of me and my servant, Francis Barber, and the life of the survivor of us, to Mr. George Stubbs, in trust for us; my mind and will is, that in case of my decease before the said agreement shall be perfected, the said sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds, and the bond for securing the said sum, shall go to the said Francis Barber; and I hereby give and bequeath to him the same, in lieu of the bequest in his favour, contained in my said will. And I hereby empower my executors to deduct and retain all expenses that shall or may be incurred in the execution of my said will, or of this codicil thereto, out of such estate and effects as I shall die possessed of. All the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate and effects I give and bequeath to my said executors, in trust for the said Francis Barber,

[1] [Poeta Græci Veteres carminis historici Scriptores qui extant omnes. *Gr. Lat.* curâ et recensione Jac. Lectii. *fol.* 1606.—ED.]

his executors, and administrators. Witness my hand and seal, this ninth day of December, 1784.

"SAM. JOHNSON, (L.S.)

"Signed, sealed, published, declared, and delivered, by the said Samuel Johnson, as, and for a codicil to his last will and testament, in the presence of us, who, in his presence, and at his request, and also in the presence of each other, have hereto subscribed our names as witnesses.

"JOHN COPLEY.
"WILLIAM GIBSON.
"HENRY COLE."

Upon these testamentary deeds it is proper to make a few observations. His express declaration with his dying breath as a Christian, as it had been often practised in such solemn writings, was of real consequence from this great man, for the conviction of a mind equally acute and strong might well overbalance the doubts of others who were his contemporaries. The expression *polluted* may, to some, convey an impression of more than ordinary contamination; but that is not warranted by its genuine meaning, as appears from "The Rambler," No. 42[1]. The same word is used in the will of Dr. Sanderson, bishop of Lincoln, who was piety itself. His legacy of two hundred pounds to the representatives of Mr. Innys, bookseller, in St. Paul's Churchyard, proceeded from a very worthy motive. He told Sir John Hawkins that his father having become a bankrupt, Mr. Innys had assisted him with money or credit to continue his business. "This," said he, "I consider as an obligation on me to be grateful to his descendants." The amount of his property proved to be considerably more than he had supposed it to be. Sir John Hawkins estimates the bequest to Francis Barber at a sum little

[1] [The quotations from the scriptures in Johnson's Dictionary sufficiently justify the use of this word; but it does not occur in No. 42 of the Rambler. In the Journey to the Hebrides he uses the word familiarly, and talks of "polluting the breakfast table with slices of cheese."—ED.]

short of fifteen hundred pounds, including an annuity of seventy pounds to be paid to him by Mr. Langton, in consideration of seven hundred and fifty pounds, which Johnson had lent to that gentleman. Sir John seems not a little angry at this bequest, and mutters "a caveat against ostentatious bounty and favour to negroes." But surely, when a man has money entirely of his own acquisition, especially when he has no near relations, he may, without blame, dispose of it as he pleases, and with great propriety to a faithful servant. Mr. Barber, by the recommendation of his master, retired to Lichfield, where he might pass the rest of his days in comfort[1]. It has been objected that Johnson has omitted many of his best friends, when leaving books to several as tokens of his last remembrance. The names of Dr. Adams, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Burney, Mr. Hector, Mr. Murphy, the authour of this work, and others who were intimate with him, are not to be found in his will. This may be accounted for by considering, that as he was very near his dissolution at the time, he probably mentioned such as happened to occur to him; and that he may have recollected, that he had formerly shown others such proofs of his regard, that it was not necessary to crowd his will with their names. Mrs. Lucy Porter was much displeased that nothing was left to her; but besides what I have now stated, she should have considered that she had left nothing to Johnson by her will, which was made during his lifetime, as appeared at her decease. His enumerating several persons in one group, and leaving them "each a book at their

[1] Francis Barber, Dr. Johnson's principal legatee, died in the infirmary at Stafford, after undergoing a painful operation, February 13, 1801.—MALONE. [In the Gentleman's Magazine for 1793, p. 619, there are some anecdotes of Barber, in which it is said that he was then forty-eight years old. Mr. Chalmers thinks that he was about fifty-six when he died; but as he entered Johnson's service in 1752, and could scarcely have been then under twelve or fourteen years of age, it is probable that he was somewhat older. See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 63.—ED.]

election," might possibly have given occasion to a curious question as to the order of choice, had they not luckily fixed on different books. His library, though by no means handsome in its appearance, was sold by Mr. Christie for two hundred and forty-seven pounds, nine shillings: many people being desirous to have a book which had belonged to Johnson[1]. In many of them he had written little notes: sometimes tender memorials of his departed wife; as "This was dear Tetty's book:" sometimes occasional remarks of different sorts. Mr. Lysons, of Clifford's-inn, has favoured me with the two following: "In 'Holy Rules and Helps to Devotion, by Bryan Duppa, Lord Bishop of Winton, '*Preces quidam videtur diligenter tractasse; spero non inauditus.*' In 'The Rosicrucian infallible Axiomata, by John Heydon, Gent.,' prefixed to which are some verses addressed to the authour, signed Ambr. Waters, A. M. Coll. Ex. Oxon. 'These Latin verses were written to Hobbes by Bathurst, upon his Treatise on Human Nature, and have no relation to the book.—An odd fraud.'"

A few days before his death, he had asked Sir John Hawkins, as one of his executors, where he should be buried; and on being answered, "Doubtless, in Westminster-Abbey," seemed to feel a satisfaction, very natural to a poet; and indeed in my opinion very natural to every man of any imagination, who has no family sepulchre in which he can be laid with his fathers. Accordingly, upon Monday, December 20, his remains, [enclosed in a leaden coffin,] were deposited in that noble and renowned edifice, [in the south transept, near the foot of Shak- Hawk. p. 564.

[1] [Mr. Windham bought Markland's Statius, and wrote in the first page, "*Fuit e libris clarissimi Samuelis Johnson.*" It now, by the favour of Mr. Jesse, who bought it at Mr. Windham's sale, belongs to the editor.—Ed.]

speare's monument, and close to the coffin of his friend Garrick;] and over his grave was placed a large blue flag-stone, with this inscription:

"SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.
Obiit XIII. die Decembris,
Anno Domini
M. DCC. LXXXIV.
Ætatis suæ LXXV."

His funeral was attended by a respectable number of his friends, particularly such of the members of The Literary Club as were in town; and was also honoured with the presence of several of the Reverend Chapter of Westminster[1]. Mr. Burke, Sir Joseph Banks, Mr. Windham, Mr. Langton, Sir Charles Bunbury, and Mr. Colman, bore his pall. His school-fellow, Dr. Taylor, performed the mournful office of reading the burial service.

I trust I shall not be accused of affectation, when I declare, that I find myself unable to express all that I felt upon the loss of such a "guide, philosopher, and friend[2]." I shall, therefore, not say one

[1] ["It must be told, that a dissatisfaction was expressed in the public papers that he was not buried with all possible funeral rites and honours. In all processions and solemnities something will be forgotten or omitted. Here no disrespect was intended. The executors did not think themselves justified in doing more than they did; for only a little cathedral service, accompanied with lights and music, would have raised the price of interment. In this matter fees ran high; they could not be excused; and the expenses were to be paid from the property of the deceased. His funeral expenses amounted to more than two hundred pounds. Future monumental charges may be defrayed by the generosity of subscription."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1785, p. 911, probably by Mr. Tyers.—ED.]

[2] On the subject of Johnson I may adopt the words of Sir John Harrington concerning his venerable tutor and diocesan, Dr. John Still, Bishop of Bath and Wells: "who hath given me some helps, more hopes, all encouragements in my best studies: to whom I never came but I grew more religious; from whom I never went, but I parted better instructed. Of him, therefore, my acquaintance, my friend, my instructor, if I speak much, it were not to be marvelled; if I speak frankly, it is not to be blamed; and though I speak partially, it were to be pardoned."—"Nugæ Antiquæ," vol. i. p. 136. There is one circumstance in Sir John's character of Bishop Still, which is peculiarly applicable to Johnson: "He became so famous a disputer, that the learnedest were even afraid to dispute with him; and he, finding his own strength, could not stick to warn them in their arguments to take heed to their answers, like a perfect fencer that will tell aforehand in which button he will give the venew, or like a cunning chess-player that will appoint aforehand with which pawn and in what place he will give the mate." *Ibid.*—BOSWELL.

word of my own, but adopt those of an eminent friend[1], which he uttered with an abrupt felicity, superiour to all studied compositions:—"He has made a chasm, which not only nothing can fill up, but which nothing has a tendency to fill up.—Johnson is dead.—Let us go to the next best: there is nobody; no man can be said to put you in mind of Johnson."

As Johnson had abundant homage paid to him during his life[2], so no writer in this nation ever had such an accumulation of literary honours after his death. A sermon upon that event was preached in St. Mary's church, Oxford, before the University, by the Rev. Mr. Agutter, of Magdalen College[3]. The Lives, the Memoirs, the Essays, both in prose and verse, which have been published concerning him, would make many volumes. The numerous attacks too upon him I consider as part of his consequence, upon the principle which he himself so well knew and asserted. Many who trembled at his presence were forward in assault, when they no longer apprehended danger. When one of his little pragmatical foes was invidiously snarling at his fame,

[1] The late Right Honourable William Gerrard Hamilton, who had been intimately acquainted with Dr. Johnson near thirty years. He died in London, July 16, 1796, in his sixty-eighth year.—MALONE.

[2] Beside the Dedications to him by Dr. Goldsmith, the Reverend Dr. Franklin, and the Reverend Mr. Wilson, which I have mentioned according to their dates, there was one by a lady, of a versification of "Aningait and Ajut," and one by the ingenious Mr. Walker, of his "Rhetorical Grammar." I have introduced into this work several compliments paid to him in the writings of his contemporaries; but the number of them is so great, that we may fairly say that there was almost a general tribute. Let me not be forgetful of the honour done to him by Colonel Myddleton, of Gwaynynog, near Denbigh; who, on the banks of a rivulet in his park, where Johnson delighted to stand and repeat verses, erected an urn with the inscription given *ante*, vol. iii. p. 153.—BOSWELL.

[Here followed an account of the various portraits of Dr. Johnson, which is transferred to the appendix.—ED.]

[3] It is not yet published. In a letter to me, Mr. Agutter says, "My sermon before the university was more engaged with Dr. Johnson's *moral* than his *intellectual* character. It particularly examined his fear of death, and suggested several reasons for the apprehensions of the good, and the indifference of the infidel, in their last hours; this was illustrated by contrasting the death of Dr. Johnson and Mr. Hume: the text was, Job, xxi. 22—26."—BOSWELL.

at Sir Joshua Reynolds's table, the Reverend Dr. Parr exclaimed, with his usual bold animation, "Ay, now that the old lion is dead, every ass thinks he may kick at him."

A monument for him, in Westminster Abbey, was resolved upon soon after his death, and was supported by a most respectable contribution; but the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's having come to a resolution of admitting monuments there, upon a liberal and magnificent plan, that cathedral was afterwards fixed on, as the place in which a cenotaph should be erected to his memory: and in the cathedral of his native city of Lichfield, a smaller one is to be erected[1]. To compose his epitaph, could not but excite the warmest competition of genius. If *laudari à laudato viro* be praise which is highly estimable, I should not forgive myself were I to omit the following sepulchral verses on the authour of THE ENGLISH DICTIONARY, written by the Right Honourable Henry Flood[2]:

"No need of Latin or of Greek to grace
Our JOHNSON's memory, or inscribe his grave;
His native language claims this mournful space,
To pay the immortality he gave."

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[1] This monument has been since erected. It consists of a medallion, with a tablet beneath, on which is this inscription:

"The friends of SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.
A Native of Lichfield,
Erected this Monument,
As a tribute of respect
To the Memory of a man of extensive learning,
A distinguished moral writer, and a sincere Christian.
He died Dec. 13, 1784, aged 75."—MALONE.

[2] To prevent any misconception on this subject, Mr. Malone, by whom these lines were obligingly communicated, requests me to add the following remark:

"In justice to the late Mr. Flood, now himself wanting, and highly meriting, an epitaph from his country, to which his transcendent talents did the highest honour, as well as the most important service, it should be observed, that these lines were by no means intended as a regular monumental inscription for Dr. Johnson. Had he undertaken to write an appropriate and discriminative epitaph for that excellent and extraordinary man, those who knew Mr. Flood's vigour of mind will have no doubt that he would have produced one worthy of his illustrious subject. But the fact was merely this: In December, 1789, after a large subscription had been made for Dr. Johnson's monument, to which Mr. Flood liberally contributed, Mr. Malone happened to call on him at his house in Berners street, and the conversation turning on the proposed monument, Mr. Malone

The Reverend Dr. Parr, on being requested to undertake the inscription for the monument, thus expressed himself in a letter to William Seward, Esq. "I leave this mighty task to some hardier and some abler writer. The variety and splendour of Johnson's attainments, the peculiarities of his character, his private virtues, and his literary publications, fill me with confusion and dismay, when I reflect upon the confined and difficult species of composition, in which alone they can be expressed, with propriety, upon his monument." But I understand that this great scholar, and warm admirer of Johnson, has yielded to repeated solicitations, and executed the very difficult undertaking.

[Dr. Johnson's monument, consisting of a colossal figure leaning against a column (but not very strongly resembling him), has since the death of Mr. Boswell been placed in St. Paul's cathedral, having been first opened to publick view, February 23, 1796. The epitaph was written by the Rev. Dr. Parr, and is as follows: Malone.

A ℛ Ω
SAMVELI · IOHNSON
GRAMMATICO · ET · CRITICO
SCRIPTORVM · ANGLICORVM · LITTERATE · PERITO
POETAE · LVMINIBVS · SENTENTIARVM
ET · PONDERIBVS · VERBORUM · ADMIRABILI
MAGISTRO · VIRTVTIS · GRAVISSIMO
HOMINI · OPTIMO · ET · SINGVLARIS · EXEMPLI

QVI · VIXIT · ANN · LXXV · MENS · II. · DIEB · XIIII.
DECESSIT · IDIB · DECEMBR · ANN · CHRIST · CIↃ · IↃCC · LXXXIIII.
SEPVLT · IN · AED · SANCT · PETR · WESTMONASTERIENS.
XIII · KAL · IANVAR · ANN · CHRIST · CIↃ · IↃCC · LXXXV,
AMICI · ET · SODALES · LITTERARII
PECVNIA · CONLATA
H · M · FACIVND · CVRAVER.

maintained that the epitaph, by whomsoever it should be written, ought to be in Latin. Mr. Flood thought differently. The next morning, in a postscript to a note on another subject, he mentioned that he continued of the same opinion as on the preceding day, and subjoined the lines above given."—Boswell.

Malone. On a scroll in his hand are the following words:

ΕΝΜΑΚΑΡΕΣΣΙΠΟΝΩΝΑΝΤΑΞΙΟΣΕΙΗΑΜΟΙΒΗ[1]

On one side of the monument:

FACIEBAT JOHANNES BACON, SCVLPTOR ANN. CHRIST.
M.D.CC.LXXXV.

The subscription for this monument, which cost eleven hundred guineas, was begun by the Literary

[1] [It is to be regretted that the committee for erecting this monument did not adhere to the principles of the *Round Robin*, on the subject of Goldsmith's epitaph, (*ante*, vol. iii. p. 448), and insist on having the epitaph to Johnson written in the language to which he had been so great and so very peculiar a benefactor. The committee of subscribers, called *curators*, were Lord Stowell, Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, Sir Joseph Banks, Mr. Metcalf, Mr. Boswell, and Mr. Malone. Mr. Metcalf, Mr. Burke, and Sir Joseph had signed the *Round Robin;* but it may be presumed that Dr. Johnson's preference of a Latin epitaph, so *positively pronounced* on that occasion, operated on their minds as an expression of what his wishes would have been as to his own. It seems, however, to the editor the height of bad taste and absurdity to exhibit Dr. Johnson in St. Paul's cathedral in the masquerade of a half naked Roman, with such pedantic, and, to the passing public, unintelligible inscriptions as the above. The following is a close translation:

Alpha. ℟ *Omega.*
To Samuel Johnson,
A grammarian and critic
Of great skill in English literature;
A poet admirable for the light of his sentences
And the weight of his words;
A most effective teacher of virtue;
An excellent man, and of singular example,
Who lived 75 years, 2 months, 14 days.
He died in the ides of December, in the year of Christ, MDCCLXXXIV.
Was buried in the church of St. Peter's, Westminster,
The 13th of the kalends of January, in the year of Christ, MDCCLXXXIV.
His literary friends and companions,
By a collection of money,
Caused this monument to be made.

The reader will not of course attribute to the original all the awkwardness of this almost literal version; but he will not fail to observe the tedious and confused mode of marking the numerals, the unnecessary repetition of them, and the introduction of *nones* and *ides*, all of which are, even on the principles of the Lapidarian scholars themselves, clumsy, and on the principles of common sense, contemptible. Thirty-four letters and numerals (nearly a tenth part of the whole inscription) are, for instance, expended in letting posterity know that Dr. Johnson was *buried* in the same month of the same year in which he *died*.

The Greek words, so pedantically jumbled together on the scroll, are an alteration by Dr. Parr of a line of Dionysius, the geographer, with which Johnson has closed the Rambler. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 203. It seems, that in deference to some apprehensions that the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's might think the Αὐτῶν ἐκ μακάρων ἀντάξιος εἴη αμοιβὴ—*from the blessed gods may he receive his merited reward*—somewhat heathenish, Dr. Parr was persuaded to convert the line into Ἐν μακάρεσσι πόνων ἀντάξιος εἴη αμοιβὴ—*may he receive amongst the blessed the merited reward of his labours.* The reader who is curious about the pompous inanities of literature will find at the end of the fourth volume of Dr. Parr's works, ed. 1828, a long correspondence between Parr, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Malone, and other friends of Dr. Johnson, on the subject of this epitaph.

Club, and completed[1] by the aid of Dr. Johnson's other friends and admirers.] Malone.

The character of SAMUEL JOHNSON has, I trust, been so developed in the course of this work, that they who have honoured it with a perusal may be considered as well acquainted with him. As however it may be expected that I should collect into one view the capital and distinguishing features of this extraordinary man, I shall endeavour to acquit myself of that part of my biographical undertaking[2], however difficult it may be to do that which many of my readers will do better for themselves.

His figure was large and well formed, and his countenance of the cast of an ancient statue; yet his appearance was rendered strange and somewhat uncouth, by convulsive cramps, by the scars of that distemper which it was once imagined the royal touch could cure, and by a slovenly mode of dress. He had the use only of one eye; yet so much does mind govern, and even supply the deficiency of organs, that his visual perceptions, as far as they extended, were uncommonly quick and accurate. So morbid was his temperament, that he never knew the natural joy of a free and vigorous use of his limbs: when he walked, it was like the struggling gait of one in fetters; when he rode, he had no command or direction of his horse, but was carried as if in a balloon. That with his constitution

He will be amused at the burlesque importance which Parr attaches to epitaph-writing, the tenacity with which he endeavoured to describe Dr. Johnson, with reference to his poetical character as *poeta probabilis*, and his candid avowal, that in the composition he was thinking more of his own character than Dr. Johnson's.—ED.]

[1] [After much delay and very great difficulty, as appears by many reproachful notices and complaints in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.—ED.]

[2] As I do not see any reason to give a different character of my illustrious friend now from what I formerly gave, the greatest part of the sketch of him in my "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides" is here adopted.—BOSWELL.

and habits of life he should have lived seventy-five years, is a proof that an inherent *vivida vis* is a powerful preservative of the human frame.

Man is, in general, made up of contradictory qualities; and these will ever show themselves in strange succession, where a consistency in appearance at least, if not reality, has not been attained by long habits of philosophical discipline. In proportion to the native vigour of the mind, the contradictory qualities will be the more prominent, and more difficult to be adjusted; and, therefore, we are not to wonder that Johnson exhibited an eminent example of this remark, which I have made upon human nature. At different times he seemed a different man in some respects; not, however, in any great or essential article, upon which he had fully employed his mind, and settled certain principles of duty, but only in his manners, and in the display of argument and fancy in his talk. He was prone to superstition, but not to credulity. Though his imagination might incline him to a belief of the marvellous and the mysterious, his vigorous reason examined the evidence with jealousy. He was a sincere and zealous christian, of high church of England and monarchical principles, which he would not tamely suffer to be questioned; and had, perhaps, at an early period, narrowed his mind somewhat too much, both as to religion and politicks. His being impressed with the danger of extreme latitude in either, though he was of a very independent spirit, occasioned his appearing somewhat unfavourable to the prevalence of that noble freedom of sentiment which is the best possession of man. Nor can it be denied that he had many prejudices; which, however, frequently suggested many of his pointed sayings, that rather show a playfulness of fancy than any settled ma-

lignity. He was steady and inflexible in maintaining the obligations of religion and morality; both from a regard for the order of society and from a veneration for the Great Source of all order; correct, nay stern in his taste; hard to please, and easily offended; impetuous and irritable in his temper, but of a most humane and benevolent heart[1], which showed itself not only in a most liberal charity, as far as his circumstances would allow, but in a thousand instances of active benevolence. He was afflicted with a bodily disease, which made him often restless and fretful, and with a constitutional melancholy, the clouds of which darkened the brightness of his fancy, and gave a gloomy cast to his whole course of thinking: we, therefore, ought not to wonder at his sallies of impatience and passion at any time, especially when provoked by obtrusive ignorance or presuming petulance, and allowance must be made for his uttering hasty and satirical sallies even against his best friends. And, surely, when it is considered, that, "amidst sickness and sorrow," he exerted his faculties in so many works for the benefit of mankind, and particularly that he achieved the great and admirable Dictionary of our language, we must be astonished at his resolution. The solemn text, "of him to whom much is given much will be required," seems to have been ever present to his mind, in a rigorous sense, and to have made him dissatisfied with his labours and acts of goodness, however comparatively great; so that the unavoidable consciousness of his superiority was, in that respect, a cause of disquiet. He

[1] In the "Olla Podrida," a collection of essays published at Oxford, there is an admirable paper upon the character of Johnson written by the Reverend Dr. Horne, the late excellent Bishop of Norwich. The following passage is eminently happy:—"To reject wisdom, because the person of him who communicates it is uncouth, and his manners are inelegant; what is it, but to throw away a pine-apple, and assign for a reason the roughness of its coat?"—BOSWELL.

suffered so much from this, and from the gloom which perpetually haunted him, and made solitude frightful, that it may be said of him, "If in this life only he had hope, he was of all men most miserable." He loved praise when it was brought to him; but was too proud to seek for it. He was somewhat susceptible of flattery. As he was general and unconfined in his studies, he cannot be considered as master of any one particular science; but he had accumulated a vast and various collection of learning and knowledge, which was so arranged in his mind as to be ever in readiness to be brought forth. But his superiority over other learned men consisted chiefly in what may be called the art of thinking, the art of using his mind; a certain continual power of seizing the useful substance of all that he knew, and exhibiting it in a clear and forcible manner; so that knowledge, which we often see to be no better than lumber in men of dull understanding, was in him true, evident, and actual wisdom. His moral precepts are practical, for they are drawn from an intimate acquaintance with human nature. His maxims carry conviction; for they are founded on the basis of common sense, and a very attentive and minute survey of real life. His mind was so full of imagery that he might have been perpetually a poet; yet it is remarkable, that however rich his prose is in this respect, his poetical pieces in general have not much of that splendour, but are rather distinguished by strong sentiment and acute observation, conveyed in harmonious and energetick verse, particularly in heroick couplets. Though usually grave, and even awful in his deportment, he possessed uncommon and peculiar powers of wit and humour; he frequently indulged himself in colloquial pleasantry; and the heartiest

merriment was often enjoyed in his company; with this great advantage, that, as it was entirely free from any poisonous tincture of vice or impiety, it was salutary to those who shared in it. He had accustomed himself to such accuracy in his common conversation[1], that he at all times expressed his thoughts with great force, and an elegant choice of language, the effect of which was aided by his having a loud voice, and a slow deliberate utterance. In him were united a most logical head with a most fertile imagination, which gave him an extraordinary advantage in arguing: for he could reason close or wide, as he saw best for the moment. Exulting in his intellectual strength and dexterity, he could, when he pleased, be the greatest

[1] Though a perfect resemblance of Johnson is not to be found in any age, parts of his character are admirably expressed by Clarendon, in drawing that of Lord Falkland, whom the noble and masterly historian describes at his seat near Oxford: "Such an immenseness of wit, such a solidity of judgment, so infinite a fancy, bound in by a most logical ratiocination. His acquaintance was cultivated by the most polite and accurate men, so that his house was an university in less volume, whither they came, not so much for repose as study, and to examine and refine those grosser propositions which laziness and consent made current in conversation." Bayle's account of Menage may also be quoted as exceedingly applicable to the great subject of this work. "His illustrious friends erected a very glorious monument to him in the collection entitled 'Menagiana.' Those who judge of things right will confess that this collection is very proper to show the extent of genius and learning which was the character of Menage. And I may be bold to say, that *the excellent works he published will not distinguish him from other learned men so advantageously as this.* To publish books of great learning, to make Greek and Latin verses exceedingly well turned is not a common talent, I own; neither is it extremely rare. It is incomparably more difficult to find men who can furnish discourse about an infinite number of things, and who can diversify them a hundred ways. How many authours are there who are admired for their works, on account of the vast learning that is displayed in them, who are not able to sustain a conversation. Those who know Menage only by his books might think he resembled those learned men; but if you show the 'Menagiana' you distinguish him from them, and make him known by a talent which is given to very few learned men. There it appears that he was a man who spoke off-hand a thousand good things. His memory extended to what was ancient and modern; to the court and to the city; to the dead and to the living languages; to things serious and things jocose; in a word, to a thousand sorts of subjects. That which appeared a trifle to some readers of the 'Menagiana,' who did not consider circumstances, caused admiration in other readers, who minded the difference between what a man speaks without preparation and that which he prepares for the press. And, therefore, we cannot sufficiently commend the care which his illustrious friends took to erect a monument so capable of giving him immortal glory. They were not obliged to rectify what they had heard him say; for, in so doing, they had not been faithful historians of his conversation."—Boswell.

sophist that ever contended in the list of declamation; and, from a spirit of contradiction, and a delight in showing his powers, he would often maintain the wrong side with equal warmth and ingenuity; so that, when there was an audience, his real opinions could seldom be gathered from his talk; though when he was in company with a single friend, he would discuss a subject with genuine fairness; but he was too conscientious to make errour permanent and pernicious, by deliberately writing it; and, in all his numerous works, he earnestly inculcated what appeared to him to be the truth; his piety being constant, and the ruling principle of all his conduct.

Such was Samuel Johnson, a man whose talents, acquirements, and virtues, were so extraordinary, that the more his character is considered, the more he will be regarded by the present age, and by posterity, with admiration and reverence.

I shall now fulfil my promise of exhibiting specimens of various sorts of imitation of Johnson's style[1].

In the "Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, 1787," there is an "Essay on the Style of Dr. Samuel Johnson," by the Reverend Robert Burrowes, whose respect for the great object of his criticism[2] is thus evinced in the concluding paragraph: "I have singled him out from the whole body of English

[1] [Transposed from p. 305, *ante*.—ED.]

[2] We must smile at a little inaccuracy of metaphor in the preface to the Transactions, which is written by Mr. Burrowes. The *critick of the style of* Johnson having, with a just zeal for literature, observed, that the whole nation are called on to exert themselves, afterwards says, "They are *called on* by every *tye* which can have laudable influence on the heart of man."—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 195.—ED.]

writers, because his universally-acknowledged beauties would be most apt to induce imitation: and I have treated rather on his faults, than his perfections, because an essay might comprise all the observations I could make upon his faults, while volumes would not be sufficient for a treatise on his perfections."

Mr. Burrowes has analyzed the composition of Johnson, and pointed out its peculiarities with much acuteness; and I would recommend a careful perusal of his Essay to those who being captivated by the union of perspicuity and splendour which the writings of Johnson contain, without having a sufficient portion of his vigour of mind, may be in danger of becoming bad copyists of his manner. I, however, cannot but observe, and I observe it to his credit, that this learned gentleman has himself caught no mean degree of the expansion and harmony which, independent of all other circumstances, characterise the sentences of Johnson. Thus, in the preface to the volume in which the Essay appears, we find,

"If it be said that in societies of this sort too much attention is frequently bestowed on subjects barren and speculative, it may be answered, that no one science is so little connected with the rest as not to afford many principles whose use may extend considerably beyond the science to which they primarily belong, and that no proposition is so purely theoretical as to be totally incapable of being applied to practical purposes. There is no apparent connexion between duration and the cycloidal arch, the properties of which duly attended to have furnished us with our best-regulated methods of measuring time: and he who had made himself master of the nature and affections of the logarithmic curve is not aware that he has advanced considerably towards ascertaining the proportionable density of the air at its various distances from the surface of the earth."

The ludicrous imitators of Johnson's style are innumerable. Their general method is to accumulate

hard words, without considering, that, although he was fond of introducing them occasionally, there is not a single sentence in all his writings where they are crowded together, as in the first verse of the following imaginary Ode by him to Mrs. Thrale [1], which appeared in the newspapers:

"*Cervisial coctor's viduate* dame,
Opins't thou this gigantick frame,
Procumbing at thy shrine,
Shall, *catenated* by thy charms,
A captive in thy *ambient* arms,
Perennially be thine?"

This and a thousand other such attempts are totally unlike the original, which the writers imagined they were turning into ridicule. There is not similarity enough for burlesque, or even for caricature.

Mr. Colman, in his "Prose on several occasions," has "A Letter from Lexiphanes, containing Proposals for a *Glossary* or *Vocabulary* of the *Vulgar Tongue;* intended as a Supplement to a larger Dictionary." It is evidently meant as a sportive sally

[1] Johnson's wishing to unite himself with this rich widow was much talked of, but I believe without foundation. The report, however, gave occasion to a poem, not without characteristical merit, entitled "Ode to Mrs. Thrale, by Samuel Johnson, LL. D. on their supposed approaching Nuptials:" printed for Mr. Faulder in Bond-street. I shall quote as a specimen the first three stanzas:

"If e'er my fingers touch'd the lyre,
In satire fierce, in pleasure gay,
Shall not my Thralia's smiles inspire?
Shall Sam refuse the sportive lay?

"My dearest lady! view your slave,
Behold him as your very *Scrub;*
Eager to write as authour grave,
Or govern well—the brewing-tub.

"To rich felicity thus raised,
My bosom glows with amorous fire.
Porter no longer shall be praised;
'Tis I myself am *Thrale's entire.*"—BOSWELL.

[Mrs. Carter, in one of her letters to Mrs. Montagu, says, "I once saw him *(Dr. Johnson)* very *indigné* when somebody jested about Mrs. Thrale's marrying himself. The choice would, no doubt, have been singular, but much less exceptionable than that which she has made."—*Mrs. Carter's Letters*, vol. iii. p. 221.—ED.]

of ridicule on Johnson, whose style is thus imitated, without being grossly overcharged:

"It is easy to foresee that the idle and illiterate will complain that I have increased their labours by endeavouring to diminish them; and that I have explained what is more easy by what is more difficult—*ignotum per ignotius*. I expect, on the other hand, the liberal acknowledgments of the learned. He who is buried in scholastick retirement, secluded from the assemblies of the gay, and remote from the circles of the polite, will at once comprehend the definitions, and be grateful for such a seasonable and necessary elucidation of his mother-tongue."

Annexed to this letter is the following short specimen of the work, thrown together in a vague and desultory manner, not even adhering to alphabetical concatenation.

"HIGGLEDY PIGGLEDY,—Conglomeration and confusion.
"HODGE-PODGE,—A culinary mixture of heterogeneous ingredients: applied metaphorically to all discordant combinations.
"TIT FOR TAT,—Adequate retaliation.
"SHILLY SHALLY,—Hesitation and irresolution.
"FEE! FA! FUM!—Gigantick intonations.
"RIGMAROLE,—Discourse, incoherent and rhapsodical.
"CRINCUM-CRANCUM,—Lines of irregularity and involution.
"DING DONG,—Tintinabulary chimes, used metaphorically to signify despatch and vehemence[1]."

The serious imitators of Johnson's style, whether intentionally or by the imperceptible effect of its strength and animation, are, as I have had already occasion to observe, so many, that I might introduce quotations from a numerous body of writers in our language, since he appeared in the literary world. I shall point out the following:

[1] [On the original publication of Mr. Boswell's own work the press teemed with parodies, or imitations of his style of reporting Dr. Johnson's conversation; but they are now all deservedly forgotten, except one by Mr. Alexander Chalmers, which is executed with so much liveliness and pleasantry, and is, in fact, so just a criticism on the lighter portions of this work, that the reader will be, the editor believes, much pleased to find it preserved in the appendix.—ED.]

WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D. D.

"In other parts of the globe, man, in his rudest state, appears as lord of the creation, giving law to various tribes of animals which he has tamed and reduced to subjection. The Tartar follows his prey on the horse which he has reared, or tends his numerous herds which furnish him both with food and clothing; the Arab has rendered the camel docile, and avails himself of its persevering strength; the Laplander has formed the reindeer to be subservient to his will; and even the people of Kamschatka have trained their dogs to labour. This command over the inferiour creatures is one of the noblest prerogatives of man, and among the greatest efforts of his wisdom and power. Without this, his dominion is incomplete. He is a monarch who has no subjects; a master without servants; and must perform every operation by the strength of his own arm[1]."

EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ.

"Of all our passions and appetites, the love of power is of the most imperious and unsociable nature, since the pride of one man requires the submission of the multitude. In the tumult of civil discord the laws of society lose their force, and their place is seldom supplied by those of humanity. The ardour of contention, the pride of victory, the despair of success, the memory of past injuries, and the fear of future dangers, all contribute to inflame the mind, and to silence the voice of pity[2]."

MISS BURNEY.

"My family, mistaking ambition for honour, and rank for dignity, have long planned a splendid connexion for me, to which, though my invariable repugnance has stopped any advances, their wishes and their views immovably adhere. I am but too certain they will now listen to no other. I dread, therefore, to make a trial where I despair of success; I know not how to risk a prayer with those who may silence me by a command[3]."

REVEREND MR. NARES[4].

"In an enlightened and improving age, much perhaps is not to be apprehended from the inroads of mere caprice: at such a

[1] "History of America," vol. i. quarto, p. 332.—BOSWELL.
[2] "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," vol. i. chap. iv.—BOSWELL.
[3] "Cecilia," book vii. chap. i.—BOSWELL.
[4] The passage which I quote is taken from that gentleman's "Elements of Orthoepy; containing a distinct View of the whole Analogy of the English

period it will generally be perceived that needless irregularity is the worst of all deformities, and that nothing is so truly elegant in language as the simplicity of unviolated analogy. Rules will, therefore, be observed, so far as they are known and acknowledged: but, at the same time, the desire of improvement having been once excited will not remain inactive; and its efforts, unless assisted by knowledge as much as they are prompted by zeal, will not unfrequently be found pernicious; so that the very persons whose intention it is to perfect the instrument of reason will deprave and disorder it unknowingly. At such a time, then, it becomes peculiarly necessary that the analogy of language should be fully examined and understood; that its rules should be carefully laid down; and that it should be clearly known how much it contains which being already right should be defended from change and violation; how much it has that demands amendment; and how much that, for fear of greater inconveniences, must, perhaps, be left, unaltered, though irregular."

A distinguished authour in "The Mirror[1]," a periodical paper published at Edinburgh, has imitated Johnson very closely. Thus, in No. 16:

"The effects of the return of spring have been frequently remarked, as well in relation to the human mind as to the animal and vegetable world. The reviving power of this season has been traced from the fields to the herds that inhabit them, and from the lower classes of beings up to man. Gladness and joy are described as prevailing through universal nature, animating the low of the cattle, the carol of the birds, and the pipe of the shepherd."

The Reverend Dr. Knox, master of Tunbridge school, appears to have the *imitari aveo* of Johnson's style perpetually in his mind; and to his assiduous, though not servile, study of it, we may partly ascribe the extensive popularity of his writings[2].

Language, so far as relates to *Pronunciation, Accent, and Quantity*:" London, 1784. I beg leave to offer my particular acknowledgments to the authour of a work of uncommon merit and great utility. I know no book which contains, in the same compass, more learning, polite literature, sound sense, accuracy of arrangement, and perspicuity of expression.—BOSWELL.

[1] That collection was presented to Dr. Johnson, I believe, by its authours; and I heard him speak very well of it.—BOSWELL.

[2] It were to be wished that he had imitated that great man in every respect

In his "Essays, Moral and Literary," No. 3, we find the following passage:

"The polish of external grace may indeed be deferred till the approach of manhood. When solidity is obtained by pursuing the modes prescribed by our forefathers, then may the file be used. The firm substance will bear attrition, and the lustre then acquired will be durable."

There is, however, one in No. 11 which is blown up into such tumidity as to be truly ludicrous. The writer means to tell us, that members of Parliament who have run in debt by extravagance will sell their votes to avoid an arrest[1], which he thus expresses:

"They who build houses and collect costly pictures and furniture with the money of an honest artisan or mechanick will be very glad of emancipation from the hands of a bailiff by a sale of their senatorial suffrage."

But I think the most perfect imitation of Johnson is a professed one, entitled "A Criticism on Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard[2]," said to be written

and had not followed the example of Dr. Adam Smith, in ungraciously attacking his venerable *Alma Mater*, Oxford. It must, however, be observed, that he is much less to blame than Smith: he only objects to certain particulars; Smith to the whole institution; though indebted for much of his learning to an exhibition which he enjoyed for many years at Baliol College. Neither of them, however, will do any hurt to the noblest university in the world. While I animadvert on what appears to me exceptionable in some of the works of Dr. Knox, I cannot refuse due praise to others of his productions; particularly his sermons, and to the spirit with which he maintains, against presumptuous hereticks, the consolatory doctrines peculiar to the Christian Revelation. This he has done in a manner equally strenuous and conciliating. Neither ought I to omit mentioning a remarkable instance of his candour. Notwithstanding the wide difference of our opinions upon the important subject of university education, in a letter to me concerning this work, he thus expresses himself: "I thank you for the very great entertainment your Life of Johnson gives me. It is a most valuable work. Yours is a new species of biography. Happy for Johnson that he had so able a recorder of his wit and wisdom."—BOSWELL.

[1] Dr. Knox, in his "Moral and Literary" abstraction, may be excused for not knowing the political regulations of his country. No senator can be in the hands of a bailiff.—BOSWELL.

[2] [It seems to the Editor to be one of the most insipid and unmeaning volumes ever published. He cannot make out whether it was meant for jest or earnest; but it fails either way, for it has neither pleasantry nor sense. Johnson saw this work, and thus writes of it: "Of the imitation of my style, in a criticism on Gray's Churchyard, I forgot to make mention. The author is, I believe, utterly

by Mr. Young, professor of Greek, at Glasgow, and of which let him have the credit, unless a better title can be shown. It has not only the particularities of Johnson's style, but that very species of literary discussion and illustration for which he was eminent. Having already quoted so much from others, I shall refer the curious to this performance, with an assurance of much entertainment.

Yet whatever merit there may be in any imitations of Johnson's style, every good judge must see that they are obviously different from the original; for all of them are either deficient in its force, or overloaded with its peculiarities; and the powerful sentiment to which it is suited is not to be found.

unknown, for Mr. Steevens cannot hunt him out. I know little of it, for though it was sent me, I never cut the leaves open. I had a letter with it, representing it to me as my own work; in such an account to the public there may be humour, but to myself it was neither serious nor comical; I suspect the writer to be wrong-headed. As to the noise which it makes I never heard it, and am inclined to believe that few attacks either of ridicule or invective make much noise but by the help of those that they provoke."—*Letter to Thrale*, 5 July, 1783.—ED.]

END OF THE LIFE.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

[NOTE on the words *balance of misery, p.* 199.]

THE Reverend Mr. Ralph Churton, Fellow of Brazen-Nose College, Oxford, has favoured me with the following remarks on my work, which he is pleased to say, "I have hitherto extolled, and cordially approve."

The chief part of what I have to observe is contained in the following transcript from a letter to a friend, which, with his concurrence, I copied for this purpose; and, whatever may be the merit or justness of the remarks, you may be sure that being written to a most intimate friend, without any intention that they ever should go further, they are the genuine and undisguised sentiments of the writer:—

"6th January, 1792.

"'Last week I was reading the second volume of 'Boswell's Johnson,' with increasing esteem for the worthy author, and increasing veneration of the wonderful and excellent man who is the subject of it. The writer throws in, now and then, very properly, some serious religious reflections; but there is one remark, in my mind an obvious and just one, which I think he has not made, that Johnson's 'morbid melancholy,' and constitutional infirmities, were intended by Providence, like St. Paul's thorn in the flesh, to check intellectual conceit and arrogance; which the consciousness of his extraordinary talents, awake as he was to the voice of praise, might otherwise have generated in a very culpable degree. Another observation strikes me, that in consequence of the same natural indisposition, and habitual sickliness (for he says he scarcely passed one day without pain after his twentieth year), he considered and represented human life as a scene of much greater misery than is generally experienced. There may be persons bowed down with affliction all their days; and there are those, no doubt, whose iniquities rob them of rest; but neither

calamities nor crimes, I hope and believe, do so much and so generally abound, as to justify the dark picture of life which Johnson's imagination designed, and his strong pencil delineated. This I am sure, the colouring is far too gloomy for what I have experienced, though, as far as I can remember, I have had more sickness (I do not say more severe, but only more in quantity) than falls to the lot of most people. But then daily debility and occasional sickness were far overbalanced by intervenient days, and, perhaps, weeks void of pain, and overflowing with comfort. So that in short, to return to the subject, human life, as far as I can perceive from experience or observation, is not that state of constant wretchedness which Johnson always insisted it was: which misrepresentation, for such it surely is, his biographer has not corrected, I suppose, because, unhappily, he has himself a large portion of melancholy in his constitution, and fancied the portrait a faithful copy of life."

The learned writer then proceeds thus in his letter to me:—

"I have conversed with some sensible men on this subject, who all seem to entertain the same sentiments respecting life with those which are expressed or implied in the foregoing paragraph. It might be added, that as the representation here spoken of appears not consistent with fact and experience, so neither does it seem to be countenanced by scripture. There is, perhaps, no part of the sacred volume which at first sight promises so much to lend its sanction to these dark and desponding notions as the book of Ecclesiastes, which so often, and so emphatically, proclaims the vanity of things sublunary. But 'the design of this whole book (as it has been justly observed) is not to put us out of conceit with life, but to cure our vain expectations of a complete and perfect happiness in this world: to convince us, that there is no such thing to be found in mere external enjoyments;—and to teach us to seek for happiness in the practice of virtue, in the knowledge and love of God, and in the hopes of a better life. For this is the application of all: *Let us hear*, &c. xii. 13. Not only his duty, but his happiness too: *For God*, &c. v. 14.—See 'Sherlock on Providence,' p. 299.

"The New Testament tells us, indeed, and most truly, that 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof:' and, therefore, wisely forbids us to increase our burden by forebodings of sorrows; but I think it nowhere says, that even our ordinary afflictions are not consistent with a very considerable degree of positive comfort and satisfaction. And, accordingly, one whose sufferings as well as merits were conspicuous assures us, that in proportion 'as the sufferings of Christ abounded in them, so their consolation also abounded by Christ.' 2 Cor. i. 5. It is needless to cite, as indeed it would be endless even to refer to, the multitude of passages in both Testaments holding out, in the strongest language, promises of blessings, even in this world, to the faithful

servants of God. I will only refer to St. Luke, xviii. 29, 30, and 1 Tim. iv. 8.

"Upon the whole, setting aside instances of great and lasting bodily pain, of minds peculiarly oppressed by melancholy, and of severe temporal calamities, from which extraordinary cases we surely should not form our estimate of the general tenour and complexion of life; excluding these from the account, I am convinced that as well the gracious constitution of things which providence has ordained, as the declarations of scripture and the actual experience of individuals, authorize the sincere Christian to hope that his humble and constant endeavours to perform his duty, chequered as the best life is with many failings, will be crowned with a greater degree of present peace, serenity, and comfort, than he could reasonably permit himself to expect, if he measured his views and judged of life from the opinion of Dr. Johnson, often and energetically expressed in the memoirs of him, without any animadversion or censure by his ingenious biographer. If he himself, upon reviewing the subject, shall see the matter in this light, he will, in an octavo edition, which is eagerly expected, make such additional remarks or corrections as he shall judge fit; lest the impressions which these discouraging passages may leave on the reader's mind should in a degree hinder what otherwise the whole spirit and energy of the work tends, and, I hope, successfully, to promote,—pure morality and true religion."

Though I have, in some degree, obviated any reflections against my illustrious friend's dark views of life, when considering, in the course of this work, his "Rambler" and his "Rasselas," I am obliged to Mr. Churton for complying with my request of his permission to insert his remarks, being conscious of the weight of what he judiciously suggests as to the melancholy in my own constitution. His more pleasing views of life, I hope, are just. *Valeant quantum valere possunt.*

Mr. Churton concludes his letter to me in these words: "Once, and only once, I had the satisfaction of seeing your illustrious friend; and as I feel a particular regard for all whom he distinguished with his esteem and friendship, so I derive much pleasure from reflecting that I once beheld, though but transiently, near our college gate, one whose works will for ever delight and improve the world, who was a sincere and zealous son of the church of England, an honour to his country, and an ornament to human nature."

His letter was accompanied with a present from himself of his "Sermons at the Bampton Lecture," and from his friend, Dr. Townson, the venerable rector of Malpas, in Cheshire, of his "Discourses on the Gospels," together with the following extract of a letter from that excellent person, who is now gone to receive the reward of his labours: "Mr. Boswell is not only very entertaining in his works, but they are so replete with moral and religious sentiments, without

an instance, as far as I know, of a contrary tendency, that I cannot help having a great esteem for him; and if you think such a trifle as a copy of the Discourses, *ex dono authoris*, would be acceptable to him, I should be happy to give him this small testimony of my regard."

Such spontaneous testimonies of approbation from such men, without any personal acquaintance with me, are truly valuable and encouraging.

No. II.

[CATALOGUE, or List of Designs, *referred to in p.* 299.]

"DIVINITY.

"A small book of precepts and directions for piety; the hint taken from the directions in *Morton's* exercise.

"PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY, AND LITERATURE IN GENERAL.

"History of Criticism, as it relates to judging of authours, from Aristotle to the present age. An account of the rise and improvements of that art: of the different opinions of authours, ancient and modern.

"Translation of the History of Herodian.

"New edition of Fairfax's Translation of Tasso, with notes, glossary, &c.

"Chaucer, a new edition of him, from manuscripts and old editions, with various readings, conjectures, remarks on his language, and the changes it had undergone from the earliest times to his age, and from his to the present; with notes explanatory of customs, &c. and references to Boccace, and other authours, from whom he has borrowed, with an account of the liberties he has taken in telling the stories; his life, and an exact etymological glossary.

"Aristotle's Rhetorick, a translation of it into English.

"A Collection of Letters, translated from the modern writers, with some account of the several authours.

"Oldham's Poems, with notes, historical and critical.

"Roscommon's Poems, with notes.

"Lives of the Philosophers, written with a polite air, in such a manner as may divert as well as instruct.

"History of the Heathen Mythology, with an explication of the fables, both allegorical and historical; with references to the poets.

"History of the State of Venice, in a compendious manner.

"Aristotle's Ethicks, an English translation of them, with notes.

"Geographical Dictionary from the French. [*Utrecht.*] MS.

"Hierocles upon Pythagoras, translated into English, perhaps with notes. This is done by Norris. [Nov. 9th, 1752.] MS.

"A book of Letters, upon all kinds of subjects.

"Claudian, a new edition of his works, *cum notis variorum,* in the manner of Burman.

"Tully's Tusculan questions, a translation of them.

"Tully's De Naturâ Deorum, a translation of those books.

"Benzo's New History of the New World, to be translated.

"Machiavel's History of Florence, to be translated.

"History of the Revival of Learning in Europe, containing an account of whatever contributed to the restoration of literature; such as controversies, printing, the destruction of the Greek empire, the encouragement of great men, with the lives of the most eminent patrons, and most eminent early professors of all kinds of learning in different countries.

"A Body of Chronology, in verse, with historical notes. [Nov. 9th, 1752:] MS.

"A Table of the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians, distinguished by figures into six degrees of value, with notes, giving the reasons of preference or degradation.

"A Collection of Letters from English authours, with a preface giving some account of the writers; with reasons for selection, and criticism upon styles; remarks on each letter, if needful.

"A Collection of Proverbs from various languages. Jan. 6th,—53.

"A Dictionary to the Common Prayer, in imitation of Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible. March,—[17]52.

"A Collection of Stories and Examples, like those of Valerius Maximus. Jan. 10th,—[17]53.

"From Ælian, a volume of select Stories, perhaps from others. Jan. 28th,—[17]53.

"Collection of Travels, Voyages, Adventures, and Descriptions of Countries.

"Dictionary of Ancient History and Mythology.

"Treatise on the Study of Polite Literature, containing the history of learning, directions for editions, commentaries, &c.

"Maxims, Characters, and Sentiments, after the manner of Bruyere, collected out of ancient authours, particularly the Greek, with Apophthegms.

"Classical Miscellanies, Select Translations from ancient Greek and Latin authours.

"Lives of Illustrious Persons, as well of the active as the learned, in imitation of Plutarch.

"Judgment of the learned upon English Authours.

"Poetical Dictionary of the English tongue.

"Considerations upon the present State of London.

"Collection of Epigrams, with notes and observations.

"Observations on the English Language, relating to words, phrases, and modes of speech.

"Minutiæ, Literariæ, Miscellaneous Reflections, Criticisms, Emendations, Notes.

"History of the Constitution.

"Comparison of Philosophical and Christian Morality, by sentences collected from the moralists and fathers.

"Plutarch's Lives, in English, with notes.

"POETRY AND WORKS OF IMAGINATION.

"Hymn to Ignorance.

"The Palace of Sloth,—a vision.

"Coluthus, to be translated.

"Prejudice,—a poetical essay.

"The Palace of Nonsense,—a vision."

Johnson's extraordinary facility of composition, when he shook off his constitutional indolence, and resolutely sat down to write, is admirably described by Mr. Courtenay, in his "Poetical Review," which I have several times quoted:

"While through life's maze he sent a piercing view,
His mind expansive to the object grew.
With various stores of erudition fraught,
The lively image, the deep-searching thought,
Slept in repose;—but when the moment press'd,
The bright ideas stood at once confess'd;
Instant his genius sped its vigorous rays,
And o'er the letter'd world diffused a blaze.
As womb'd with fire the cloud electrick flies,
And calmly o'er th' horizon seems to rise:
Touch'd by the pointed steel, the lightning flows,
And all th' expanse with rich effulgence glows."

We shall in vain endeavour to know with exact precision every production of Johnson's pen. He owned to me that he had written about forty sermons; but as I understood that he had given or sold them to different persons, who were to preach them as their own, he did not consider himself at liberty to acknowledge them. Would those who were thus aided by him, who are still alive, and the friends of those who are dead, fairly inform the world, it would be obligingly gratifying a reasonable curiosity, to which there should, I think, now be no objection. Two volumes of them, published since his death, are sufficiently ascertained. See vol. iv. p. 32. I have before me in his handwriting a fragment of twenty quarto leaves, of a translation into English of Sallust, *De Bello Catilinario*. When it was done I have no notion; but it seems to have no very superiour

merit to mark it as his. Besides the publications heretofore mentioned, I am satisfied, from internal evidence, to admit also as genuine the following, which, notwithstanding all my chronological care, escaped me in the course of this work:

"Considerations on the Case of Dr. Trapp's Sermons,"† published in 1739, in the "Gentleman's Magazine." It is a very ingenious defence of the right of abridging an authour's work, without being held as infringing his property. This is one of the nicest questions in the *Law of Literature;* and I cannot help thinking, that the indulgence of abridging is often exceedingly injurious to authours and booksellers, and should in very few cases be permitted. At any rate, to prevent difficult and uncertain discussion, and give an absolute security to authours in the property of their labours, no abridgment whatever should be permitted till after the expiration of such a number of years as the legislature may be pleased to fix.

But, though it has been confidently ascribed to him, I cannot allow that he wrote a dedication to both houses of parliament of a book entitled "The Evangelical History Harmonized." He was no *croaker*, no declaimer against the *times*. He would not have written "That we are fallen upon an age in which corruption is not barely universal, is universally confessed." Nor, "Rapine preys on the publick without opposition, and perjury betrays it without inquiry." Nor would he, to excite a speedy reformation, have conjured up such phantoms of terrour as these: "A few years longer, and perhaps all endeavours will be in vain. We may be swallowed by an earthquake; we may be delivered to our enemies." This is not Johnsonian.

There are, indeed, in this dedication several sentences constructed upon the model of those of Johnson. But the imitation of the form, without the spirit of his style, has been so general, that this of itself is not sufficient evidence. Even our newspaper writers aspire to it. In an account of the funeral of Edwin, the comedian, in "The Diary" of Nov. 9, 1790, that son of drollery is thus described: "A man who had so often cheered the sullenness of vacancy, and suspended the approaches of sorrow." And in "The Dublin Evening Post," August 16, 1791, there is the following paragraph: "It is a singular circumstance, that in a city like this, containing 200,000 people, there are three months in the year during which no place of publick amusement is open. Long vacation is here a vacation from pleasure, as well as business; nor is there any mode of passing the listless evenings of declining summer, but in the riots of a tavern, or the stupidity of a coffee-house."

I have not thought it necessary to specify every copy of verses written by Johnson, it being my intention to publish an authentick edition of all his poetry, with notes.

No. III.

[Dr. Johnson's portraits,—*referred to in page 353.*

The note on Dr. Johnson's portraits being incomplete, the editor is obliged to Mr. John Murray, junior, for considerable additions to the list, which are distinguished by brackets.]

Date of painting.		Engraver's name.	Date of engraving.
[Prior to 1752.	A miniature, painter unknown, which belonged to Mrs. Johnson, now in the possession of Dr. Harwood. See preface, p. xiv.		
	First engraved for this edition, size of the original	E. Finden	1830
	A three-quarter face to the left (in an oval); he is dressed in what was styled a seven story wig, and holds a pen up to his eye. The likeness apparently taken before any of Sir Joshua's portraits	No artist's name	or date]

BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

[1756.	I. Mr. Boswell's picture; sold at James Boswell's sale for seventy guineas. Dr. Johnson in an arm chair, seated at a table with writing materials; pen in his hand.]		
	4to. for first edition of Boswell's Life	J. Heath.	1791
	Ditto 8vo. for 8vo. edition of ditto	J. Baker.	1791
	[This picture has been repeatedly engraved for various editions of this work.		
[Before 1770.	II. *Now in the Marquis of Stafford's collection.* Side face, to right, eyes almost closed, without wig; showing the nervous habit to which he was addicted, when unemployed, of moving his hands up and down before him, with the fingers extended. It was of this picture that he said, "It is not friendly to hand down to posterity the imperfections of any man."		
	Sir Joshua is said to have had in his mind this attitude and the abstracted expression of Dr. Johnson's countenance, when he painted the Soothsayer Tiresias in his large picture of the Infant Hercules.		
	Folio, mezzotint, very fine	James Watson.	1770
	8vo. Mezzotint for Sir Joshua's works	S. W. Reynolds.	
1773.	An etching of the head only, from a copy of this picture by Ozias Humphrey	Mrs. D. Turner.]	
	III. Mr. Langton's picture, now at Gunby, near Spilsby, Lincolnshire, the seat of Peregrine Massingberd, Esq. Mr. Langton's second son.		
	Sheet mezzotint, very fine	W. Doughty.	1784
	Line, prefixed to Dictionary folio	T. Cook.	1787
	Ditto to Dictionary 4to.	Ditto.	1787
	[Small ditto to Bell's Poets	Ditto.	1787
	Oval	Bromley.	
	For the Rambler, oval, small size	John Hall.	1779
	Oval, prefixed to first ed. of Lives of the Poets	T. Trotter.	1779
	4to. prefixed to Dictionary	J. Heath	1799
	In stipple	Schavionetti	1809
	4to. prefixed to Dictionary	W. Holl.	1814
	A very excellent line engraving for the Dict. published by Robinson	W. C. Edwards,	1828
	Ditto, smaller	Ditto	1823

8vo. mezzotint for the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds . . . . . S. W. Reynolds.]

1778. IV. Mrs. Piozzi's picture, *now in the possession of Watson Taylor, Esq.* Three-quarter face, to left, holding a book up to his eye.

In an oval 8vo., for Murphy's ed. of his works	J. Hall.	1787
[Ditto	Audinet.	
Ditto	I. Fittler	
Ditto, face to the right . . .	Heath.	
Ditto, 12mo. for Cooke's Poets . .	Granger	1799
Prefixed to his works, 1823 . .	W. T. Fry.	1816

V. Duke of Dorset's picture at Knole, now Lord Plymouth's; a copy of No. II.]

[BY BARRY.

About 1781. Full face, finished only as far as the shoulders, and copied into one of the large pictures now in the room of the Society of Arts in the Adelphi. The original sketch was sold at Barry's sale to Mr. Manson for 30 guineas.

Engraved in line 4to size . . .	Anker Smith	1808
Ditto, 8vo. with specimens of Dr. Johnson's signature at different periods of his life .	Audinet	1829]

BY OPIE.

Three-quarter face, to the left. Engraved in an oval, prefixed to Dictionary folio .	J. Heath	1786
[Do. 4to.	Davenport]	
Folio Mezzotint	C. Townley *	1792

BY NORTHCOTE.

[Three-quarter face, to right, holding a book	I. J. De Claussin	1813]

BY MISS REYNOLDS.

[1783. A miniature. This portrait did not please Dr. J., who styled it "Johnson's grimly ghost."]

BY MR. ZOFFANIJ.

BY O. HUMPHREY.

1773. A miniature.

	Drawn by	Engraver's name.	Date of engraving.
[Head in a small oval .	T. Trotter	T. Trotter	1782]
Profile in oval, to the left, without wig . . .	Do.	Do.	1784
Whole length, in the dress worn by him on the journey to the Hebrides, with his stick, folio . .	Do.	Do.	1786

* Brother of Mr. Townley, of the Commons, an ingenious artist, who resided some time at Berlin, and has the honour of being engraver to his Majesty the King of Prussia. This is one of the finest mezzotintos that ever was executed; and what renders it of extraordinary value, the plate was destroyed after four or five impressions only were taken off. One of them is in the possession of Sir William Scott.—BOSWELL. [It is probable that these four or five were merely early impressions taken off from the same plate, the dedication to Mr. Boswell, which distinguishes them, having been erased after they were printed.—J. MURRAY, JUN.]

[Side-face, to right, the countenance haggard, and exhibiting marks of decay. This was probably the last portrait for which Dr. Johnson sat; it was finished a short time before his death T. Trotter T. Trotter 1786]

[Do. prefixed to Harding's Shakspeare; drawing belonged to Dr. Farmer . . Do. Do. 1792]

Side-face, to right . . J. Harding Do. 1782

Medallion, profile to left, with wig, prefixed to the Dictionary . . . . . F. Bartolozzi Bartolozzi 1785

Ditto for Sharpe's Johnsoniana Do. G. Murray 1820

A wood-cut, on the title-page of Sharpe's edition of this work, in 1 vol. Do Thompson 1830

[A small oval, profile to right N. Gardiner N. Gardiner 1786

8vo. profile, to right . P. S. Lambourn P. S. Lambourn 1791]

Profile, to left, prefixed to Johnsoniana . . Unknown J. Taylor 1756

For "Lavater's Essays on Physiognomy," in which Johnson's countenance is analysed upon the principles of that fanciful writer.

1748. [A view of Tunbridge Wells, in which Dr. and Mrs. Johnson are introduced; the figures very small. See vol. i. p. 68. Loggan 1804

A whole-length, in a cocked hat, ruffles on the hands, holding a stick behind his back . . . . . Not known

There is a whole-length figure in Cambridge's works, 4to., drawn and engraved by Besland.]

BUST BY NOLLEKENS,

[1781. Never cut in marble; the first cast from the mould is now the property of Hon. Agar Ellis. Without the wig; the flowing hair which hangs down the neck copied from a beggar, whom Mr. Smith states to have been called from the street to serve as model.

After a drawing from the above Ab. Wivell W. T. Fry 1815]

STATUE BY BACON

In St. Paul's; the first monument ever placed in that building.

Repeatedly engraved.

There are also several seals with his head cut on them, particularly a very fine one by that eminent artist, Edward Burch, Esq, R.A.; in the possession of the younger Dr. Charles Burney.

[Copied and engraved by . Richter Richter 1797]

Let me add, as a proof of the popularity of his character, that there are copper pieces struck at Birmingham, with his head impressed on them, which pass current as halfpence there, and in the neighbouring parts of the country.

[In this list are enumerated, it is believed, all the original portraits of Dr. Johnson, but only the *most remarkable* of the engravings taken from them. The valuable and interesting collection of Henry Smedley, Esq. in which will be found almost every print of him which has been published, contains more than *one hundred* distinct plates, which have been executed at different times.

An illustrated copy of Boswell's Life, belonging to Mr. Smith, of the British Museum, in addition to numerous rare impressions of portraits of Dr. Johnson, is embellished with views of all the houses in which he resided; many of them drawn by Mr. Smith himself.—J. MURRAY, JUN.]

GENERAL APPENDIX.

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GENERAL APPENDIX.

No. I.

RECOLLECTIONS
Of Dr. Johnson by Miss Reynolds.

MR. PALMER'S *papers contain two manuscripts*[1] *of Miss Reynolds's* Recollections, *both in her own handwriting, nearly the same in substance, but differing a good deal as to the order, and something as to the handling, of the various topics. Miss Reynolds's best style was, as Dr. Johnson himself hinted to her, not a clear one, and in those rambling Recollections, scattered over separate sheets of paper, there is a good deal of tautology and confusion, through which the editor has had some difficulty in discovering any thing like order. He has, however, made an arrangement which, if not quite satisfactory, is at least intelligible. These* Recollections *tell little that is new, but they confirm and explain, and occasionally throw a useful light on some interesting points of Dr. Johnson's manners and character: and although they have not the advantage of having been written while the matters were quite fresh in Miss Reynolds's mind, the long and cordial intimacy between her and Dr. Johnson entitles them to as much confidence as can be placed in* Recollections. ED.

"THE first time I was in company with Dr. Johnson, which was at Miss Cotterel's, I well remember the flattering notice he took of a lady present, on her saying that she was inclined to estimate the morality of every person according as they liked or disliked Clarissa Harlowe. He was a great admirer of Richardson's works in general, but of Clarissa he always spoke with the highest enthusiastic praise. He used to say that it was the first book in the world for the knowledge it displays of the human heart[2].

"Yet of the author I never heard him speak with any degree of cordiality, but rather as if impressed with some cause of resentment against him; and this has been imputed to something of jealousy, not to say envy, on account of Richardson's having engrossed the attentions and affectionate assiduities of several very ingenious literary ladies, whom he used to call his adopted daughters, and for whom

[1] [Mr. Gwatkin's copy of these *Recollections* seems to have been extracted and abridged from the originals by another hand.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 49.—ED.]

Dr. Johnson had conceived a paternal affection (particularly for two of them, Miss Carter and Miss Mulso, now Mrs. Chapone), previous to their acquaintance with Richardson, and it was said that he thought himself neglected by them on his account.

"Dr. Johnson set a higher value upon female friendship than perhaps most men [1], which may reasonably be supposed was not a little enhanced by his acquaintance with those ladies, if it was not originally derived from them. To their society, doubtless, Richardson owed that delicacy of sentiment, that feminine excellence, as I may say, that so peculiarly distinguishes his writings from those of his own sex in general, how high soever they may soar above the other in the more dignified paths of literature, in scientific investigations, and abstruse inquiries.

"Dr. Johnson used to repeat, with very apparent delight, some lines of a poem written by Miss Mulso:

'Say, Stella, what is love, whose cruel power
Robs virtue of content, and youth of joy?
What nymph or goddess, in what fatal hour,
Produced to light the mischief-making boy?
Some say, by Idleness and Pleasure bred,
The smiling babe on beds of roses lay:
There with soft honey'd dews by Fancy fed,
His infant beauties open'd on the day [2].'

"Dr. Johnson had an uncommon retentive memory for every thing that appeared to him worthy of observation. Whatever he met with in reading, particularly poetry, I believe he seldom required a revisal to be able to repeat verbatim. If not literally so, his deviations were generally improvements. This was the case, in some respects, in Shenstone's poem of the 'Inn,' which I learned from hearing Dr. Johnson repeat it; and I was surprised, on seeing it lately among the author's works for the first time, to find it so different. One stanza he seems to have extemporized himself:

'*And once again I shape my way*
Through rain, through shine, through thick and thin,
Secure to meet, at close of day,
A kind reception at an inn.'

---

[1] ["In his conversation with ladies, he had such a felicity as would put vulgar gallantry out of countenance. Of the female mind he conceived a higher opinion than many men, and, though *he was never suspected of a* blamable *intimacy with any individual of them* (see *ante*, p. 306), had a great esteem for the sex. The defect in his powers of sight rendered him totally insensible to the charms of beauty; but he knew that beauty was the attribute of the sex, and treated all women with such an equable complacency as flattered every one into a belief that she had her share of that or some more valuable endowment. In his discourses with them his compliments had ever a neat and elegant turn: they were never direct, but always implied the merit they were intended to attest." —*Hawkins's Life*, p. 309.—ED].

[2] [Johnson paid the first of those stanzas the great and undeserved compliment of quoting it in his Dictionary, under the word "QUATRAIN."—ED.]

"He always read amazingly quick, glancing his eye from the top to the bottom of the page in an instant. If he made any pause, it was a compliment to the work; and after seesawing[1] over it a few minutes, generally repeated the passage, especially if it was poetry.

"One day, on taking up Pope's 'Essay on Man,' a particular passage seemed more than ordinary to engage his attention; so much so indeed that, contrary to his usual custom, after he had left the book and the seat in which he was sitting, he returned to revise it, turning over the pages with anxiety to find it, and then repeated,

'Passions, though selfish, if their means be fair,
List under Reason, and deserve her care:
Those that, imparted, court a nobler aim,
Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name.'

Epis. ii. v 96.

His task, probably, was the whole paragraph, but these lines only were audible.

"He seemed much to delight in reciting verses, particularly from Pope. Among the many I have had the pleasure of hearing him recite, the conclusion of the 'Dunciad;' and his Epistle to Jervas, seemed to claim his highest admiration.

'Led by some rule that guides, but not constrains,
And finish'd more through happiness than pains[2],'

he used to remark, was a union that constituted the ultimate degree of excellence in the fine arts.

"Two lines also from Pope's 'Universal Prayer' I have heard him quote, in very serious conversation, as his theological creed:

'And binding Nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.'

"Some lines also he used to repeat in his best manner, written in memory of Bishop Boulter[3], which I believe are not much known.

'Some write their wrongs in marble; he, more just,
Stoop'd down serene and wrote them in the dust;
Trod under foot, the sport of every wind,
Swept from the earth, and blotted from his mind.
There, secret in the grave, he had them lie,
And grieved they could not 'scape the Almighty's eye.'

"A lady who had learnt them from Dr. Johnson thought she had made a mistake, or had forgot some words, as she could not make

[1] [A lady said pleasantly of Dr. Johnson's strange movement, or oscillation while reading, that "*his head swung seconds.*"—*Miss Hawkins's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 216. —Ed.]

[2] Epistle to Jervas.—Miss Reynolds.

[3] [By Dr. Madden. See *ante*, v. i. p. 307.—Ed.]

out a reference to *there*, and mentioned it to him. 'No,' he said, 'she had not;' and after seesawing a few minutes, said something that indicated surprise, that he should not have made the same remark before.

"Some time after, he told the lady that these lines were inserted in the last edition of his Dictionary, under the word SPORT[1].

"Of Goldsmith's Traveller he used to speak in terms of the highest commendation. A lady[2] I remember, who had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Johnson read it from the beginning to the end on its first coming out, to testify her admiration of it, exclaimed, 'I never more shall think Dr. Goldsmith ugly.' In having thought so, however, she was by no means singular; an instance of which I am rather inclined to mention, because it involves a remarkable one of Dr. Johnson's ready wit: for this lady, one evening being in a large party, was called upon after supper for her toast, and seeming embarrassed, she was desired to give the ugliest man she knew; and she immediately named Dr. Goldsmith, on which a lady[3] on the other side of the table rose up and reached across to shake hands with her, expressing some desire of being better acquainted with her, it being the first time they had met; on which Dr. Johnson said, 'Thus the ancients, on the commencement of their friendships, used to sacrifice a beast betwixt them.'

"Sir Joshua, I have often thought, never gave a more striking proof of his excellence in portrait-painting, than in giving dignity to Dr. Goldsmith's countenance, and yet preserving a strong likeness. But he drew after his mind, or rather his genius, if I may be allowed to make that distinction, assimilating the one with his conversation, the other with his works.

"Dr. Goldsmith's cast of countenance, and indeed his whole figure from head to foot, impressed every one at first sight with an idea of his being a low mechanic—particularly, I believe, a journeyman tailor. A little concurring instance of this I well remember. One day at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, in company with some gentlemen and ladies, he was relating with great indignation an insult he had just received from some gentleman he had accidentally met (I think at a coffee-house). 'The fellow,' he said, 'took me for a tailor!' on which all the party either laughed aloud or showed they suppressed a laugh.

"Dr. Johnson seemed to have much more kindness for Goldsmith, than Goldsmith had for him. He always appeared to be overawed by Johnson, particularly when in company with people of any con-

[1] [They are so. We see in this case, and that of Miss Mulso (*ante*, p. 384), that Dr. Johnson's personal partialities induced him to quote in his Dictionary authors who "had no business there." See *ante*, v. i. p. 307, the motive of his gratitude to Madden.—ED.]

[2] [Miss Reynolds herself.—ED.]

[3] Mrs. Cholmondely.—MISS REYNOLDS.

sequence, always as if impressed with some fear of disgrace, and indeed well he might. I have been witness to many mortifications he has suffered in Dr. Johnson's company: one day in particular, at Sir Joshua's table, a gentleman to whom he was talking his best stopped him, in the midst of his discourse, with 'Hush! hush! Dr. Johnson is going to say something.'

"At another time, a gentleman who was sitting between Dr. Johnson and Dr. Goldsmith, and with whom he had been disputing, remarked to another, loud enough for Goldsmith to hear him, 'That he had a fine time of it, between *Ursa major* and *Ursa minor*[1]!'

"Mr. Baretti used to remark (with a smile) that Dr. Johnson always talked his best to the ladies. But indeed that was his general practice to all who would furnish him with a subject worthy of his discussion; for, what was very singular in him, he would rarely, if ever, begin any subject himself, but would sit silent[2] till something was particularly addressed to him, and if that happened to lead to any scientific or moral inquiry, his benevolence, I believe, more immediately incited him to expatiate on it for the edification of the ignorant than for any other motive whatever.

"One day, on a lady's telling him that she had read Parnell's 'Hermit' with dissatisfaction, for she could not help thinking that thieves and murderers, who were such immediate ministers from heaven of good to man, did not deserve such punishments as our laws inflict, Dr. Johnson spoke such an eloquent oration, so deeply philosophical, as indeed afforded a most striking instance of the truth of Baretti's observation, but of which, to my great regret, I can give no corroborating proof, my memory furnishing me with nothing more than barely the general tendency of his arguments, which was to prove, that though it might be said that wicked men, as well as the good, were ministers of God, because in the moral sphere the good we enjoy and the evil we suffer are administered to us by man, yet, as infinite goodness could not inspire or influence man to act wickedly, but, on the contrary, it was his divine property to produce good out of evil, and as man was endowed with free-will to act, or to refrain from acting wickedly, with knowledge of good and evil, with conscience to admonish and to direct him to choose the one and to reject the other, he was, therefore, as criminal in the sight of God and of

[1] [The editor has preserved this specimen, as a striking instance of the easy fabrication of what are called *anecdotes*, and of how little even the best authorities can be relied on in such matters. The real anecdote was of *Doctor Major* and *Doctor Minor* (see *ante*, vol. ii. p. 350), by no means so happy as the fabrication, and the title of *Ursa Major* was applied to Johnson by old Lord Auchinlech (*ante*, vol. ii. p. 79). From these two facts the pleasant fallacy quoted by Miss Reynolds was no doubt compounded. —Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 307.—Ed.]

man, and as deserving punishment for his evil deeds, as if no good had resulted from them.

"And yet, though, to the best of my remembrance, this was the substance of Dr. Johnson's discourse in answer to the lady's observation, I am rather apprehensive that in some respects it may be thought inconsistent with his general assertions, that man was by nature much more inclined to evil than to good. But it would ill become me to expatiate on such a subject.

"Yet what can be said to reconcile his opinion of the natural tendency of the human heart to evil with his own zealous virtuous propensions? Nothing perhaps, at least by me, *but* that this opinion, I believe, was founded upon religious principles relating to original sin; and I well remember that, when disputing with a person on this subject, who thought that nature, reason, and virtue were the constituent principles of humanity, he would say, 'Nay, nay, if man is by nature prompted to act virtuously, all the divine precepts of the gospel, all its denunciations, all the laws enacted by man to restrain man from evil, had been needless.'

"It is certain that he would scarcely allow any one to feel much for the distresses of others, or whatever he thought they might feel, he was very apt to impute to causes that did no honour to human nature. Indeed I thought him rather too fond of Rochefoucault maxims.

"The very strict watch he apparently kept over his mind seems to correspond with his thorough conviction of nature's evil propensions; but it might be as likely in consequence of his dread of those peculiar ones, whatever they were, which attended, or rather constituted his mental malady, which, I have observed, might probably have incited him so often to pray; and I impute it to the same cause, that he so frequently, with great earnestness, desired his intimate acquaintance to pray for him, apparently on very slight occasions of corporeal disorder.

[Here followed an expression of surprise at his having desired a prayer from Dr. Dodd, and several particulars of that story, already amply told in vol. iii. p. 503 *et seq.*, and in vol. iv. p. 15.]

"And another axiom of his, of the same tendency, was, that the pains and miseries incident to human life far outweighed its happiness and good. [Vol. iii. p. 226[1].]

"But indeed much may be said in Dr. Johnson's justification, supposing this notion should not meet with universal approbation, having, it is probable, imbibed them in the early part of his life when under the pressure of adverse fortune, and in every period of it under

[1] [Where passages from these "Recollections" have been introduced in the text of the preceding volumes, these marks refer to the places where they are to be found.—Ed.]

the still heavier pressure and more adverse influence of Nature herself; for I have often heard him lament that he inherited from his father a morbid disposition both of body and of mind—*an oppressive melancholy, which robbed him of the common enjoyments of life* [1].

"Indeed he seemed to struggle almost incessantly with some mental evil, and often by the expression of his countenance and the motion of his lips appeared to be offering up some ejaculation to Heaven to remove it. But in Lent, or near the approach of any great festival, he would generally retire from the company to a corner of the room, but most commonly behind a window-curtain, to pray, and with such energy, and in so loud a whisper, that every word was heard distinctly, particularly the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, with which he constantly concluded his devotions. Sometimes some words would emphatically escape him in his usual tone of voice [2].

"At these holy seasons he secluded himself more from society than at other times, at least from general and mixed society; and on a gentleman's sending him an invitation to dinner on Easter Eve he was highly offended, and expressed himself so in his answer.

"Probably his studious attention to the secret workings of his *peculiar mental infirmity*, together with his experience of divine assistance co-operating with his reasoning faculties, to repel its force, may have proved in the highest degree conducive to the exaltation of his piety, and the pre-eminence of his wisdom. And I think it equally probable, that all his natural defects were conducive to that end; for being so peculiarly debarred from the enjoyment of those amusements which the eye and the ear afford, doubtless he sought more assiduously for those gratifications which scientific pursuits or philosophic meditation bestow.

"These defects sufficiently account for his insensibility of the charms of music and of painting, being utterly incapable of receiving any delight from the one or the other, particularly from painting, his sight being more deficient than his hearing.

"Of the *superficies* of the fine arts, or visible objects of taste, he could have had but an imperfect idea; but as to the invisible principles of a natural good taste, doubtless he was possessed of these in the most eminent degree, and I should have thought it a strange inconsistency indeed in his character, had he really wanted a taste for music; but as a proof that he did not, I think I had need only mention, that he was remarkably fond of Dr. Burney's History of Music [3],

[1] [This last paragraph was originally written, "*terrifying melancholy, which he was sometimes apprehensive bordered on insanity.*" This Miss Reynolds softened into the remark as it stands above.—ED.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 196.—ED.]

[3] [Miss Reynolds will hardly convince any one that Dr. Johnson was fond of *music* by proving that he was fond of his friend Dr. Burney's History of Music. The truth is, he held both painting and music in great contempt, because his organs afforded him no adequate perception of either.—ED.]

and that he said it showed that the author understood the philosophy of music better than any man that ever wrote on that subject.

"It is certain that, when in the company of connoisseurs, whose conversation has turned chiefly upon the merits of the attractive charms of painting, perhaps of pictures that were immediately under their inspection, Dr. Johnson, I have thought, used to appear as if conscious of his unbecoming situation, or rather, I might say, suspicious that it was an unbecoming situation.

"But it was observable, that he rather avoided the discovery of it, for when asked his opinion of the likeness of any portrait of a friend, he has generally evaded the question, and if obliged to examine it, he has held the picture most ridiculously, quite close to his eye, just as he held his book. But he was so unwilling to expose that defect, that he was much displeased with Sir Joshua, I remember, for drawing him with his book held in that manner, which, I believe, was the cause of that picture being left unfinished[1].

"On every occasion that had the least tendency to depreciate religion or morality, he totally disregarded all forms or rules of good breeding, as utterly unworthy of the slightest consideration.

"But it must be confessed that he sometimes suffered this noble principle to transgress its due bounds, and to extend even to those who were any ways connected with the person who had offended him.

"His treatment of Mr. Israel Wilkes [related *ante*, vol. iii. p. 427] was mild in comparison of what a gentleman[2] met with from him one day at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, a barrister-at-law and a man of fashion, who, on discoursing with Dr. (then Mr.) Johnson on the laws and government of different nations (I remember particularly those of Venice), and happening to speak of them in terms of high approbation: 'Yes, sir,' says Johnson, 'all republican rascals think as you do.' How the conversation ended I have forgot, it was so many years ago; but that he made no apology to the gentleman I am very sure, nor to any person present, for such an outrage against society.

"Of latter years he grew much more companionable, and I have heard him say, that he knew himself to be so. 'In my younger days,' he would say, 'it is true I was much inclined to treat mankind with asperity and contempt; but I found it answered no good end. I thought it wiser and better to take the world as it goes. Besides, as I have advanced in life I have had more reason to be satisfied with it. Mankind have treated me with more kindness, and of course I have more kindness for them.'

"In the latter part of his life, indeed, his circumstances were very different from what they were in the beginning. Before he had

[1] [This however, or a similar picture, was finished and engraved as the frontispiece of Murphy's edition of Dr. Johnson's works.—Ed.]

[2] Mr. Elliott.—Miss Reynolds.

the pension, he literally dressed like a beggar[1]; and from what I have been told, he as literally lived as such; at least as to common conveniences in his apartments, wanting even a chair to sit on, particularly in his study, where a gentleman who frequently visited him whilst writing his Idlers constantly found him at his desk, sitting on one with three legs; and on rising from it, he remarked that Dr. Johnson never forgot its defect, but would either hold it in his hand or place it with great composure against some support, taking no notice of its imperfection to his visitor. Whether the visitor sat on a chair, or on a pile of folios[2], or how he sat, I never remember to have been told.

"It was remarkable in Dr. Johnson, that no external circumstances ever prompted him to make any apology, or to seem even sensible of their existence. Whether this was the effect of philosophic pride, or of some partial notion of his respecting high breeding, is doubtful. Strange as it may appear, he scrupled not to boast, that 'no man knew the rules of true politeness better than himself;' and, stranger still, 'that no man more attentively practised them.'

"He particularly piqued himself upon his nice observance of ceremonious punctilios towards ladies. A remarkable instance of this was his never suffering any lady to walk from his house to her carriage, through Bolt-court, unattended by himself to hand her into it (at least I have reason to suppose it to be his general custom, from his constant performance of it to those with whom he was the most intimately acquainted); and if any obstacle prevented it from driving off, there he would stand by the door of it, and gather a mob around him; indeed, they would begin to gather the moment he appeared handing the lady down the steps into Fleet-street. But to describe his appearance—his important air—that indeed cannot be described; and his morning habiliments would excite the utmost astonishment in my reader, that a man in his senses could think of stepping outside his door in them, or even to be seen at home! Sometimes he exhibited himself at the distance of eight or ten doors from Bolt-court, to get at the carriage, to the no small diversion of the populace[3]. And I am certain that, to those who love laughing, a description of his dress

[1] [See *post*, in Miss Hawkins's Anecdotes, how different his appearance was after the pension.—Ed.]

[2] ["He had a large but not a splendid library, near 5000 volumes. Many authors, not in hostility with him, presented him with their works. But his study did not contain half his books. He possessed the chair that belonged to the Ciceronian Dr. King of Oxford, which was given him by his friend Vansittart. It answers the purposes of reading and writing, by night or by day; and is as valuable in all respects as the chair of Ariosto, as delineated in the preface to Hoole's liberal translation of that poet. Since the rounding of this period, intelligence is brought that this literary chair is purchased by Mr. Hoole. Relicks are venerable things, and are only not to be worshipped. On the reading-chair of Mr. Speaker Onslow, a part of this historical sketch was written."—Tyers.—Ed.]

[3] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 429.—Ed.]

from head to foot would be highly acceptable, and in general I believe be thought the most curious part of my book; but I forbear, out of respect to his memory, to give more than this slight intimation of it; for, having written a minute description of his figure, from his wig to his slippers, a thought occurred that it might probably excite some person to delineate it, and I might have the mortification to see it hung up at a printshop as the greatest curiosity ever exhibited.

"His best dress was, in his early times, so very mean, that one afternoon as he was following some ladies up stairs, on a visit to a lady of fashion (Miss Cotterel[1]); the servant, not knowing him, suddenly seized him by the shoulder, and exclaimed, 'Where are you going?' striving at the same time to drag him back; but a gentleman[2] who was a few steps behind prevented her from doing or saying more, and Mr. Johnson growled all the way up stairs, as well he might. He seemed much chagrined and discomposed. Unluckily, whilst in this humour, a lady of high rank[3] happening to call upon Miss Cotterel, he was most violently offended with her for not introducing him to her ladyship, and still more so for her seeming to show more attention to her than to him. After sitting some time silent, meditating how to *down* Miss Cotterel, he addressed himself to Mr. Reynolds, who sat next him, and, after a few introductory words, with a loud voice said, 'I wonder which of us two could get most money at his trade in one week, were we to work hard at it from morning till night.' I don't remember the answer; but I know that the lady, rising soon after, went away without knowing what trade they were of. She might probably suspect Mr. Johnson to be a poor author by his dress; and because the trade of neither a blacksmith, a porter, or a chairman, which she probably would have taken him for in the street, was not quite so suitable to the place she saw him in.

"This incident he used to mention with great glee—how he had *downed* Miss Cotterel, though at the same time he professed a great friendship and esteem for that lady.

"It is certain, for such kind of mortifications, he never expressed any concern; but on other occasions he has shown an amiable sorrow[4]

[1] [His acquaintance with this lady and her sister, who married Dean Lewis, continued to the last days of his life. He says in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, "I know not whether I told you that my old friend *Mrs.* Cotterel, now no longer *Miss*, has called to see me. Mrs. Lewis is not well.—*26th April*, 1784." It is gratifying to observe how many of Johnson's earliest friends continued so to the last.—Ed.]

[2] [Sir Joshua (then Mr.) Reynolds.—Ed.]

[3] Lady Fitzroy.—Miss Reynolds. [See *antè*, v. i, p. 228, where this story is told of the Duchess of Argyll and another lady of high rank: that other lady was no doubt the person erroneously designated by Miss Reynolds as *Lady Fitzroy*. She probably was Elizabeth Cosby, wife of Lord Augustus Fitzroy, and grandmother of the present Duke of Grafton.—Ed.]

[4] ["He repented just as certainly however, if he had been led to praise any person or thing by accident more than he thought it deserved; and was on such occasions comically earnest to destroy the praise or pleasure he had unintentionally given."—*Piozzi's Anecdotes*, p. 75.—Ed.]

for the offence he has given, particularly if it seemed to involve the slightest disrespect to the church or to its ministers.

[Vol. iv. p. 487; vol. iii. p. 341; vol. iv. p. 50, 360.]

"It is with much regret that I reflect on my stupid negligence to write down some of his discourses, his observations, precepts, &c. The following few short sentences only did I ever take any account of in writing; and these, which I lately found in an old memorandum pocket-book, of ancient date, were made soon after the commencement of my acquaintance with him. A few others, indeed, relating to the character of the French (*ante*, vol. iii. p. 289), were taken *vivâ voce*, the day after his arrival from France, Nov. 14, 1775, intending them for the subject of a letter to a friend in the country.

"Talking on the subject of scepticism:—

"JOHNSON. 'The eyes of the mind are like the eyes of the body; they can see only at such a distance: but because we cannot see beyond this point, is there nothing beyond it?'

"Talking of the want of memory:—

"JOHNSON. 'No, sir, it is not true; in general every person has an equal capacity for reminiscence, and for one thing as well as another, otherwise it would be like a person complaining that he could hold silver in his hand, but could not hold copper.'

"A GENTLEMAN. 'I think when a person laughs alone he supposes himself for the moment with company.' JOHNSON. 'Yes, if it be true that laughter is a comparison of self-superiority, you must suppose some person with you.'

"'No, sir,' he once said, 'people are not born with a particular genius for particular employments or studies, for it would be like saying that a man could see a great way east, but could not west. It is good sense applied with diligence to what was at first a mere accident, and which, by great application, grew to be called, by the generality of mankind, a particular genius.

"Some person advanced, that a lively imagination disqualified the mind from fixing steadily upon objects which required serious and minute investigation. JOHNSON. 'It is true, sir, a vivacious quick imagination does sometimes give a confused idea of things, and which do not fix deep, though, at the same time, he has a capacity to fix them in his memory if he would endeavour at it. It being like a man that, when he is running, does not make observations on what he meets with, and consequently is not impressed by them; but he has, nevertheless, the power of stopping and informing himself.'

"A gentleman was mentioning it as a remark of an acquaintance of his, 'that he never knew but one person that was completely wicked.' JOHNSON. 'Sir, I don't know what you mean by a person completely wicked.' GENTLEMAN. 'Why, any one that has

entirely got rid of all shame.' JOHNSON. 'How is he, then, completely wicked? He must get rid too of all conscience.' GENTLEMAN. 'I think conscience and shame the same thing.' JOHNSON. 'I am surprised to hear you say so; they spring from two different sources, and are distinct perceptions: one respects this world, the other the next.' A LADY. 'I think, however, that a person who has got rid of shame is in a fair way to get rid of conscience.' JOHNSON. 'Yes, 'tis a part of the way, I grant; but there are degrees at which men stop, some for the fear of men, some for the fear of God: shame arises from the fear of men, conscience from the fear of God.'

"Dr. Johnson seemed to delight in drawing characters; and when he did so *con amore*, delighted every one that heard him. Indeed I cannot say I ever heard him draw any *con odio*, though he professed himself to be, or at least to love, a *good hater*. But I have remarked that his dislike of any one seldom prompted him to say much more than that the fellow is a *blockhead*, a *poor creature*, or some such epithet.

"I shall never forget the exalted character he drew of his friend Mr. Langton, nor with what energy, what fond delight, he expatiated in his praise, giving him every excellence that nature could bestow, and every perfection that humanity could acquire[1]. A literary lady was present, Miss H. More, who perhaps inspired him with an unusual ardour to shine, which indeed he did with redoubled lustre, deserving himself the praises he bestowed: not but I have often heard him speak in terms equally high of Mr. Langton, though more concisely expressed.

"This brings to my remembrance the unparalleled eulogium which the late Lord Bath made on a lady he was intimately acquainted with, in speaking of her to Sir Joshua Reynolds. His lordship said that he did not believe that there ever was a more perfect human being created, or ever would be created, than Mrs. Montagu. I give the very words I heard from Sir Joshua's mouth; from whom also I heard that he repeated them to Mr. Burke—observing that Lord Bath could not have said more, 'And I do not think that he said too much,' was Mr. Burke's reply. I have also heard Dr. Johnson speak of this lady in terms of high admiration. [Vol. iii. p 412-3.]

"On the praises of Mrs. Thrale he used to dwell with a peculiar delight, a paternal fondness, expressive of conscious exultation in being so intimately acquainted with her. One day, in speaking of her to Mr. Harris, author of 'Hermes,' and expatiating on her various perfections,—the solidity of her virtues, the brilliancy of her wit, and the strength of her understanding, &c.—he quoted some lines

[1] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 77, and vol. v. p. 177.—ED.]

(a stanza I believe, but from what author I know not), with which he concluded his most eloquent eulogium, and of these I retained but the two last lines[1]:

'Virtues—of such a generous kind,
Good in the last recesses of the mind.'

"It will doubtless appear highly paradoxical to the generality of the world to say, that few men, in his ordinary disposition, or common frame of mind, could be more inoffensive than Dr. Johnson; yet surely those who knew his uniform benevolence, and its actuating principles—steady virtue, and true holiness—will readily agree with me, that peace and good-will towards man were the natural emanations of his heart.

"When travelling with a lady[2] in Devonshire, in a post-chaise, near the churchyard of Wear, near Torrington, in which she saw the verdant monument of maternal affection described in the *Melancholy Tale*, and heard the particular circumstances relating to the subject of it; and as she was relating them to Dr. Johnson, she heard him heave heavy sighs and sobs, and turning round she saw his dear face bathed in tears! A circumstance he had probably forgotten when he wrote at the end of the manuscript poem with his correcting pen in red ink, *I know not when I have been so much affected.*

"I believe no one has described his extraordinary gestures or anticks[3] with his hands and feet, particularly when passing over the threshold of a door, or rather before he would venture to pass through any doorway. On entering Sir Joshua's house with poor Mrs. Williams, a blind lady who lived with him, he would quit her hand, or else whirl her about on the steps as he whirled and twisted about to perform his gesticulations; and as soon as he had finished, he would give a sudden spring, and make such an extensive stride over the threshold, as if he was trying for a wager how far he could stride, Mrs. Williams standing groping about outside the door, unless the servant took hold of her hand to conduct her in, leaving Dr. Johnson to perform at the parlour door much the same exercise over again.

"But it was not only at the entrance of a door that he exhibited such strange manœuvres, but across a room or in the street with company, he has stopped on a sudden, as if he had recollected his

[1] Being so particularly engaged as not to be able to attend to them sufficiently.—Miss Reynolds.

[2] [Miss Reynolds herself; and the *Melancholy Tale* was probably a poem which he had written on this event, whatever it was.—Ed.]

[3] [Mr. Boswell frequently (vol. i. p. 116, and vol. ii. p. 256) and Mr. Whyte (*ante*, vol. i. p. 497, and vol. iii. p. 200), have described his gestures very strikingly, though not quite in so much detail as Miss Reynolds. Mr. Boswell's descriptions she must have seen.—Ed.]

task, and began to perform it there, gathering a mob round him; and when he had finished would hasten to his companion (who probably had walked on before) with an air of great satisfaction that he had done his duty!

"One Sunday morning as I was walking with him in Twickenham meadows he began his anticks both with his feet and hands, with the latter as if he was holding the reins of a horse like a jockey on full speed. But to describe the strange positions of his feet is a difficult task; sometimes he would make the back part of his heels to touch, sometimes his toes, as if he was aiming at making the form of a triangle, at least the two sides of one. Though, indeed, whether these were his gestures on this particular occasion in Twickenham meadows I do not recollect, it is so long since; but I well remember that they were so extraordinary that men, women, and children gathered round him, laughing. At last we sat down on some logs of wood by the river side, and they nearly dispersed; when he pulled out of his pocket 'Grotius *de Veritate Religionis*,' over which he seesawed at such a violent rate as to excite the curiosity of some people at a distance to come and see what was the matter with him.

"He always carried a religious treatise in his pocket on a Sunday, and he used to encourage me to relate to him the particular parts of Scripture I did not understand, and to write them down as they occurred to me in reading the Bible.

"As we were returning from the meadows that day, I remember we met Sir John Hawkins, whom Dr. Johnson seemed much rejoiced to see; and no wonder, for I have often heard him speak of Sir John in terms expressive of great esteem and much cordiality of friendship. On his asking Dr. Johnson when he had seen Dr. Hawkesworth, he roared out with great vehemency, 'Hawkesworth is grown a coxcomb, and I have done with him.' We drank tea that afternoon at Sir J. Hawkins's, and on our return I was surprised to hear Dr. Johnson's minute criticism on Lady Hawkins's dress, with every part of which almost he found fault. [Vol. iii. p. 419.]

"Few people (I have heard him say) understood the art of carving better than himself; but that it would be highly indecorous in him to attempt it in company, being so nearsighted, that it required a suspension of his breath during the operation.

"It must be owned indeed that it was to be regretted that he did not practise a little of that delicacy in eating, for he appeared to want breath more at that time than usual.

"It is certain that he did not appear to the best advantage at the hour of repast; but of this he was perfectly unconscious, owing probably to his being totally ignorant of the characteristic expressions of the human countenance, and therefore he could have no conception

that his own expressed when most pleased any thing displeasing to others; for, though, when particularly directing his attention towards any object to spy out defects or perfections, he generally succeeded better than most men; partly, perhaps, from a desire to excite admiration of his perspicacity, of which he was not a little ambitious—yet I have heard him say, and I have often perceived, that he could not distinguish any man's face half a yard distant from him; not even his most intimate acquaintance. [Vol. iv. p. 200, and 451.]

"Though it cannot be said that he was in manners gentle, yet it justly can that he was in affections mild, benevolent, and compassionate; and to this combination of character may I believe be ascribed in a great measure his extraordinary celebrity; his being beheld as a phenomenon or wonder of the age!

"And yet Dr. Johnson's character, singular as it certainly was from the contrast of his mental endowments with the roughness of his manners, was, I believe, perfectly natural and consistent throughout; and to those who were intimately acquainted with him must I imagine have appeared so. For being totally devoid of all deceit, free from every tinge of affectation or ostentation, and unwarped by any vice, his singularities, those strong lights and shades that so peculiarly distinguish his character, may the more easily be traced to their primary and natural causes.

"The luminous parts of his character, his soft affections, and I should suppose his strong intellectual powers, at least the dignified charm or radiancy of them, must be allowed to owe their origin to his strict, his rigid principles of religion and virtue; and the shadowy parts of his character, his rough, unaccommodating manners, were in general to be ascribed to those corporeal defects that I have already observed naturally tended to darken his perceptions of what may be called propriety and impropriety in general conversation; and of course in the ceremonious or artificial sphere of society gave his deportment so contrasting an aspect to the apparent softness and general uniformity of cultivated manners.

"And perhaps the joint influence of these two primeval causes, his intellectual excellence and his corporeal defects, mutually contributed to give his manners a greater degree of harshness than they would have had if only under the influence of one of them, the imperfect perceptions of the one not unfrequently producing misconceptions in the other.

"Besides these, many other equally natural causes concurred to constitute the singularity of Dr. Johnson's character. Doubtless the progress of his education had a double tendency to brighten and to obscure it. But I must observe, that this obscurity (implying only his awkward uncouth appearance, his ignorance of the rules of politeness, &c.) would have gradually disappeared at a more advanced period, at

least could have had no manner of influence to the prejudice of Dr. Johnson's character, had it not been associated with those corporeal defects above mentioned. But unhappily his untaught, uncivilized manner seemed to render every little indecorum or impropriety that he committed doubly indecorous and improper."

II.

Miscellaneous Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson.

Ed. [*The editor is well aware of the general inaccuracy of what are called* anecdotes, *and has accordingly admitted very few additions of that kind to either the text or notes of this work; but there are several anecdotes current in literature and society, which the reader may not be sorry to see in this place. Some of them stand on the authority of the relater; some are confirmed by, or confirmatory of anecdotes already told; others again require to be noticed either for explanation or correction; and all may be considered as fairly coming within the scope of a work the peculiar object of which is to collect into one view all that can elucidate the biography of Dr. Johnson.*]

SOME ACCOUNT OF DR. JOHNSON

FROM MR. CUMBERLAND'S MEMOIRS.

Cumb. Mem. vol. i. p. 353. "Who will say that Johnson would have been such a champion in literature—such a front-rank soldier in the fields of fame, if he had not been pressed into the service, and driven on to glory with the bayonet of sharp necessity pointed at his back? If fortune had turned him into a field of clover, he would have laid down and rolled in it. The mere manual labour of writing would not have allowed his lassitude and love of ease to have taken the pen out of the inkhorn, unless the cravings of hunger had reminded him that he must fill the sheet before he saw the table-cloth. He might indeed have knocked down Osburne for a blockhead, but he would not have knocked him down with a folio of his own writing. He would perhaps have been the dictator of a club, and wherever he sat down to conversation, there must have been that splash of strong bold thought about him, that we might still have had a *collectanea* after his death; but of prose I guess not much, of works of labour none, of fancy perhaps something more, especially of poetry, which under favour I conceive was not his tower of strength. I think we should have had his Rasselas at all events, for he was likely enough to have written at Voltaire, and

brought the question to the test, if infidelity is any aid to wit. An orator he must have been; not improbably a parliamentarian, and, if such, certainly an oppositionist, for he preferred to talk against the tide. He would indubitably have been no member of the Whig Club, no partisan of Wilkes, no friend of Hume, no believer in Macpherson; he would have put up prayers for early rising, and laid in bed all day, and with the most active resolutions possible been the most indolent mortal living. He was a good man by nature, a great man by genius; we are now to inquire what he was by compulsion. Cumb. Mem. vol. i. p. 354.

"Johnson's first style was naturally energetic, his middle style was turgid to a fault, his latter style was softened down and harmonized into periods, more tuneful and more intelligible. His execution was rapid, yet his mind was not easily provoked into exertion; the variety we find in his writings was not the variety of choice arising from the impulse of his proper genius, but tasks imposed upon him by the dealers in ink, and contracts on his part submitted to in satisfaction of the pressing calls of hungry want; for, painful as it is to relate, I have heard that illustrious scholar assert (and he never varied from the truth of fact) that he subsisted himself for a considerable space of time upon the scanty pittance of fourpence halfpenny per day. Alas! I am not fit to paint his character; nor is there need of it; *Etiam mortuus loquitur*: every man, who can buy a book, has bought a Boswell: Johnson is known to all the reading world. I also knew him well, respected him highly, loved him sincerely: it was never my chance to see him in those moments of moroseness and ill-humour which are imputed to him, perhaps with truth, for who would slander him? But I am not warranted by any experience of those humours to speak of him otherwise than of a friend, who always met me with kindness, and from whom I never separated without regret. When I sought his company he had no capricious excuses for withholding it, but lent himself to every invitation with cordiality, and brought good-humour with him, that gave life to the circle he was in.

"He presented himself always in his fashion of apparel: a brown coat with metal buttons, black waistcoat and worsted stockings, with a flowing bob wig, was the style of his wardrobe, but they were in perfectly good trim, and with the ladies, which he generally met, he had nothing of the slovenly philosopher about him; he fed heartily, but not voraciously, and was extremely courteous in his commendations of any dish that pleased his palate; he suffered his next neighbour to squeeze the China oranges into his wine glass after dinner, which else perchance had gone aside and trickled into his shoes, for the good man had neither straight sight nor steady nerves.

"At the tea table he had considerable demands upon his favourite beverage, and I remember when Sir Joshua Reynolds at my house reminded him that he had drank eleven cups, he replied, 'Sir, I did

Cumb. Mem. vol. i. p. 357.

not count your glasses of wine, why should you number up my cups of tea?' And then laughing, in perfect good-humour he added, 'Sir, I should have released the lady from any further trouble if it had not been for your remark; but you have reminded me that I want one of the dozen, and I must request Mrs. Cumberland to round up my number.' When he saw the readiness and complacency with which my wife obeyed his call, he turned a kind and cheerful look upon her, and said, 'Madam, I must tell you for your comfort, you have escaped much better than a certain lady did awhile ago, upon whose patience I intruded greatly more than I have done on yours; but the lady asked me for no other purpose than to make a zany of me, and set me gabbling to a parcel of people I knew nothing of; so, madam, I had my revenge of her; for I swallowed five-and-twenty cups of her tea, and did not treat her with as many words.' I can only say my wife would have made tea for him as long as the New River could have supplied her with water.

"It was on such occasions he was to be seen in his happiest moments, when animated by the cheering attention of friends whom he liked, he would give full scope to those talents for narration in which I verily think he was unrivalled both in the brilliancy of his wit, the flow of his humour, and the energy of his language. Anecdotes of times past, scenes of his own life, and characters of humorists, enthusiasts, crack-brained projectors, and a variety of strange beings that he had chanced upon, when detailed by him at length, and garnished with those episodical remarks, sometimes comic, sometimes grave, which he would throw in with infinite fertility of fancy, were a treat, which though not always to be purchased by five-and-twenty cups of tea, I have often had the happiness to enjoy for less than half the number.

"He was easily led into topics; it was not easy to turn him from them; but who would wish it? If a man wanted to show himself off by getting up and riding upon him, he was sure to run restive and kick him off; you might as safely have backed Bucephalus, before Alexander had lunged him. Neither did he always like to be over-fondled; when a certain gentleman out-acted his part in this way, he is said to have demanded of him, 'What provokes your risibility, sir? Have I said any thing that you understand? Then I ask pardon of the rest of the company.' But this is Henderson's anecdote of him, and I won't swear he did not make it himself. The following apology, however, I myself drew from him; when speaking of his tour, I observed to him upon some passages as rather too sharp upon a country and people who had entertained him so handsomely: 'Do you think so, Cumbey?' he replied; 'then I give you leave to say, and you may quote me for it, that there are more gentlemen in Scotland than there are shoes.'

"But I don't relish these sayings, and I am to blame for retailing them; we can no more judge of men by these droppings from their lips, than we can guess at the contents of the river Nile by a pitcher of its water. If we were to estimate the wise men of Greece by Laertius's scraps of their sayings, what a parcel of old women should we account them to have been! Cumb. Mem. vol. i. p. 360.

"When Mr. Colman, then manager of Covent-garden theatre, protested against Goldsmith's last comedy, when as yet he had not struck upon a name for it, Johnson stood forth in all his terrors as champion for the piece, and backed by us, his clients and retainers, demanded a fair trial. Colman again protested; but, with that salvo for his own reputation, liberally lent his stage to one of the most eccentric productions that ever found its way to it, and *She Stoops to Conquer* was put into rehearsal.

"We were not over-sanguine of success, but perfectly determined to struggle hard for our author: we accordingly assembled our strength at the Shakspeare Tavern in a considerable body for an early dinner, where Samuel Johnson took the chair at the head of a long table, and was the life and soul of the corps: the poet took post silently by his side, with the Burkes, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Fitzherbert[1], Caleb Whitefoord, and a phalanx of North-British pre-determined applauders, under the banner of Major Mills, all good men and true. Our illustrious friend was in inimitable glee, and poor Goldsmith that day took all his raillery as patiently and complacently as my friend Boswell would have done any day, or every day of his life. In the mean time we did not forget our duty, and though we had a better comedy going on, in which Johnson was chief actor, we betook ourselves in good time to our separate and allotted posts, and waited the awful drawing up of the curtain. As our stations were pre-concerted, so were our signals for plaudits arranged and determined upon in a manner that gave every one his cue where to look for them, and how to follow them up.

"We had amongst us a very worthy and efficient member, long since lost to his friends and the world at large, Adam Drummond, of amiable memory, who was gifted by nature with the most sonorous, and at the same time the most contagious laugh, that ever echoed from the human lungs. The neighing of the horse of the son of Hystaspes was a whisper to it; the whole thunder of the theatre could not drown it. This kind and ingenuous friend fairly forewarned us that he knew no more when to give his fire than the cannon did that was planted on a battery. He desired therefore to have a flapper at his elbow, and I had the honour to be deputed to that

[1] [A mistake. "She Stoops to Conquer" was played on Monday the 15th March, 1773. Mr. Fitzherbert died early in 1772.—Ed.]

Cumb. Mem. vol. i. p. 368.

office. I planted him in an upper box, pretty nearly over the stage, in full view of the pit and galleries, and perfectly well situated to give the echo all its play through the hollows and recesses of the theatre. The success of our manœuvres was complete. All eyes were upon Johnson, who sate in the front row of a side box, and when he laughed, every body thought themselves warranted to roar. In the mean time my friend Drummond followed signals with a rattle so irresistibly comic, that, when he had repeated it several times, the attention of the spectators was so engrossed by his person and performances, that the progress of the play seemed likely to become a secondary object, and I found it prudent to insinuate to him that he might halt his music without any prejudice to the author; but, alas! it was now too late to rein him in; he had laughed upon my signal where he found no joke, and now unluckily he fancied that he found a joke in almost every thing that was said; so that nothing in nature could be more mal-a-propos than some of his bursts every now and then were. These were dangerous moments, for the pit began to take umbrage; but we carried our play through, and triumphed not only over Colman's judgment, but our own.

"I have heard Dr. Johnson relate with infinite humour the circumstance of his rescuing Goldsmith from a ridiculous dilemma by the purchase-money of his Vicar of Wakefield, which he sold on his behalf to Dodsley, and, as I think, for the sum of ten pounds only [1]. He had run up a debt with his landlady for board and lodging of some few pounds, and was at his wits' end how to wipe off the score and keep a roof over his head, except by closing with a very staggering proposal on her part, and taking his creditor to wife, whose charms were very far from alluring, whilst her demands were extremely urgent. In this crisis of his fate he was found by Johnson in the act of meditating on the melancholy alternative before him. He showed Johnson his manuscript of The Vicar of Wakefield, but seemed to be without any plan, or even hope, of raising money upon the disposal of it: when Johnson cast his eye upon it, he discovered something that gave him hope, and immediately took it to Dodsley, who paid down the price above-mentioned in ready money, and added an eventual condition upon its future sale. Johnson described the precautions he took in concealing the amount of the sum he had in hand, which he prudently administered to him by a guinea at a time. In the event he paid off the landlady's score, and redeemed the person of his friend from her embraces. Goldsmith had the joy of finding his ingenious work succeed beyond his hopes, and from that time began to place a confidence in the resources of his talents, which thence-

[1] [Another mistake. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 427. But it would really seem as if Dr. Johnson himself sometimes varied in telling this story, for Hawkins, Mrs. Piozzi, Cumberland and Boswell, all have different versions. The least credible seems to be Cumberland's.—Ed.]

forward enabled him to keep his station in society, and cultivate the friendship of many eminent persons, who, whilst they smiled at his eccentricities, esteemed him for his genius and good qualities. Cumb. Mem. vol. i. p. 375.

"Garrick was followed to the Abbey by a long extended train of friends, illustrious for their rank and genius. I saw old Samuel Johnson standing beside his grave, at the foot of Shakspeare's monument, and bathed in tears. A few succeeding years laid him in earth; and though the marble shall preserve for ages the exact resemblance of his form and features, his own strong pen has pictured out a transcript of his mind, that shall outlive that and the very language which he laboured to perpetuate. Johnson's best days were dark; and only when his life was far in the decline, he enjoyed a gleam of fortune long withheld. Compare him with his countryman and contemporary last mentioned, and it will be one instance among many, that the man who only brings the muse's bantlings into the world has a better lot in it than he who has the credit of begetting them.

"Shortly after Garrick's death, Dr. Johnson was told in a large company, 'You are recent from your Lives of the Poets: why not add your friend Garrick to the number?' Johnson's answer was, 'I do not like to be officious; but if Mrs. Garrick will desire me to do it, I shall be very willing to pay that last tribute to the memory of the man I loved.' This sentiment was conveyed to Mrs. G. but no answer was ever received.

"The expanse of matter which Johnson had found room for in his intellectual storehouse, the correctness with which he had assorted it, and the readiness with which he could turn to any article that he wanted to make present use of, were the properties in him which I contemplated with the most admiration. Some have called him a savage; they were only so far right in the resemblance, as that, like the savage, he never came into suspicious company without his spear in his hand and his bow and quiver at his back.

* * * * * *[1]

"As a poet, his translations of Juvenal gave him a name in the world, and gained him the applause of Pope. He was a writer of tragedy, but his Irene gives him no conspicuous rank in that department. As an essayist he merits more consideration: his Ramblers are in every body's hands; about them opinions vary, and I rather believe the style of these essays is not now considered as a good model; this he corrected in his more advanced age, as may be seen in his Lives of the Poets, where his diction, though occasionally elaborate and highly metaphorical, is not nearly so inflated and ponderous as in the Ramblers. He was an acute and able critic; the enthusiastic admirers of Milton and the friends of Gray will have something to

[1] [Here followed the passage introduced *ante*, vol. v. p. 301, *n.*—Ed.]

Cumb. Mem. vol. i. p. 361.

complain of, but criticism is a task which no man executes to all men's satisfaction. His selection of a certain passage in the Mourning Bride of Congreve, which he extols so rapturously, is certainly a most unfortunate sample; but unless the oversights of a critic are less pardonable than those of other men, we may pass this over in a work of merit, which abounds in beauties far more prominent than its defects, and much more pleasing to contemplate. In works professedly of fancy he is not very copious; yet in his Rasselas we have much to admire, and enough to make us wish for more. It is the work of an illuminated mind, and offers many wise and deep reflections, clothed in beautiful and harmonious diction. We are not indeed familiar with such personages as Johnson has imagined for the characters of his fable, but if we are not exceedingly interested in their story, we are infinitely gratified with their conversation and remarks. In conclusion, Johnson's era was not wanting in men to be distinguished for their talents, yet if one was to be selected out as the first great literary character of the time, I believe all voices would concur in naming him. Let me here insert the following lines, descriptive of his character, though not long since written by me, and to be found in a public print:

"ON SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"Herculean strength and a Stentorian voice,
Of wit a fund, of words a countless choice:
In learning rather various than profound,
In truth intrepid, in religion sound:
A trembling form and a distorted sight,
But firm in judgment and in genius bright;
In controversy seldom known to spare,
But humble as the publican in prayer;
To more than merited his kindness, kind,
And, though in manners harsh, of friendly mind;
Deep tinged with melancholy's blackest shade,
And, though prepared to die, of death afraid—
Such Johnson was; of him with justice vain,
When will this nation see his like again?"

Ched. Letters, p. 222.

Lord Chedworth, *in his Letters to the Rev. Mr. Crompton, relates the following Anecdote.*

"When I was last in town I dined in company with the eminent Mr. C. [1] of whom I did not form a high opinion. He asserted that Dr. Johnson originally intended to abuse Paradise Lost, but being

[1] [Mr. Crompton informs the editor, that this was the Rev. William Coxe, who had recently published his travels.—ED.]

informed that the nation would not bear it, he produced the critique which now stands in the Life of Milton, and which he admitted to be excellent. I contended that Dr. Johnson had there expressed his real opinion, which no man was less afraid of delivering than Dr. Johnson, that the critique was written *con amore*, and that the work was praised with such a glow of fondness, and the grounds of that praise were so fully and satisfactorily unfolded, that it was impossible Dr. Johnson should not have felt the value of the work, which he had so liberally and rationally commended. It came out afterwards that Dr. Johnson had disgusted Mr. C[oxe]. He had supped at Thrale's one night when he sat near the upper end of the table, and Dr. Johnson near the lower end; and having related a long story which had very much delighted the company, in the pleasure resulting from which relation Dr. Johnson had not (from his deafness and the distance at which he sat) participated, Mrs. Thrale desired him to retell it to the doctor. C[oxe] complied, and going down to the bottom of the table, bawled it over again in Dr. Johnson's ear: when he had finished, Johnson replied, 'So, sir, and this you relate as a good thing:' at which C[oxe] fired. He added to us, 'Now it was a good thing, *because* it was about the King of Poland.' Of the value of the story, as he did not relate it, I cannot judge; but I am sure you will concur with me that it was not therefore necessarily a good thing because it was about a king. I think Johnson's behaviour was indefensibly rude, but from the sample I had of C[oxe]'s conversation, I am led to suspect that Johnson's censure was not unfounded." Ched. Letters, p. 222.

ANECDOTES OF DR. JOHNSON

BY MR. WICKINS, OF LICHFIELD.

(*From the Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xciii. p. 389.)

[*Dr. Harwood informs the Editor, that Mr. Wickins was a respectable draper in Lichfield. It is very true that Dr. Johnson was accustomed to call on him during his visits to his native town. The garden attached to his house was ornamented in the manner he describes, and no doubt was ever entertained of the exactness of his anecdotes.*] Ed.

"Walking one day with him in my garden at Lichfield, we entered a small meandering shrubbery, whose 'Vista not lengthened to the sight,' gave promise of a larger extent. I observed that he might perhaps conceive that he was entering an extensive labyrinth, but that it would prove a deception, though I hoped not an unpardonable one. 'Sir,' said he, 'don't tell me of deception; a lie, sir, is a lie, whether it be a lie to the eye or a lie to the ear.'

"Passing on we came to an urn which I had erected to the me-

Wick. Anec. mory of a deceased friend. I asked him how he liked that urn—it was of the true Tuscan order. 'Sir,' said he, 'I hate them[1]; they *are* nothing, they *mean* nothing, convey no ideas but ideas of horror —would they were beaten to pieces to pave our streets!'

"We then came to a cold bath. I expatiated upon its salubrity. 'Sir,' said he, 'how do you do?' 'Very well, I thank you, doctor.' 'Then, sir, let well enough alone, and be content. I hate immersion.' Truly, as Falstaff says, the doctor 'would have a sort of alacrity at sinking[2].'

"Upon the margin stood the Venus de Medicis.

'So stands the statue that enchants the world.'

'Throw her,' said he, 'into the pond to hide her nakedness, and to cool her lasciviousness.'

"He then, with some difficulty, squeezed himself into a root house, when his eye caught the following lines from Parnell:

'Go search among your idle dreams,
Your busy, or your vain extremes,
And find a life of equal bliss,
Or own the next began in this.'

"The doctor, however, not possessing any *silvan* ideas, seemed not to admit that heaven could be an Arcadia."

"I then observed him with Herculean strength tugging at a nail which he was endeavouring to extract from the bark of a plum tree; and having accomplished it, he exclaimed, 'There, sir, I have done *some* good to-day; the tree might have festered. I make a rule, sir, to do some good every day of my life.'

"Returning through the house, he stepped into a small study or book-room. The first book he laid his hands upon was Harwood's[3] 'Liberal Translation' of the New Testament.' The passage which St. John, xi. 35. first caught his eye was from that sublime apostrophe in St. John, upon the raising of Lazarus, 'Jesus wept;' which Harwood had conceitedly rendered 'and Jesus, the Saviour of the world, burst into a flood of tears.' He contemptuously threw the book aside, exclaiming, 'Puppy!' I then showed him Sterne's Sermons. 'Sir,' said he, 'do you ever read any others?' 'Yes, doctor; I read Sherlock, Tillotson, Beveridge, and others.' 'Ay, sir, *there* you drink the cup of salvation to the bottom; here you have merely the froth from the surface.'

[1] [See a similar sentiment on the occasion of Mr. Myddleton's urn to himself, v. iv. p. 2.—Ed.]

[2] [A mistake; he was a good swimmer. See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 456.—Ed.]

[3] [The reader must bear in mind that this Doctor Edward Harwood, the same mentioned by Mr. Cradock, and who has been dead many years, is not to be confounded with Dr. Thomas Harwood, of Lichfield, who is now alive, and whose information is quoted at the head of this article.—Ed.]

"Within this room stood the Shakspearean mulberry vase, a pedestal given by me to Mr. Garrick, and which was recently sold, with Mr. Garrick's gems, at Mrs. Garrick's sale at Hampton. The doctor read the inscription: Wick. Anecd.

'SACRED TO SHAKSPEARE,
And in honour of
DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.
The Ornament—the Reformer
Of the British Stage.'

"'Ay, sir; Davy, Davy loves flattery, but here indeed you have flattered him as he deserves, paying a just tribute to his merit.'"

"In Boswell's Life of Dr. Johnson," says another correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "he[1] relates, that Garrick being asked by Johnson what people said of his Dictionary, told him, that among other animadversions, it was objected that he cited authorities which were beneath the dignity of such a work, and mentioned Richardson. 'Nay,' said Johnson, 'I have done worse than that; I have cited thee, David.' This anecdote induced me to turn over the leaves of his Dictionary, that I might note the citations from each writer. Two only I found from Garrick, viz. G.W.L. Gent. Mag. v. xciv. p. 386.

'Our bard 's a *fabulist*, and deals in fiction.'

'I know you all expect, from seeing me,
Some formal lecture, spoke with *prudish* face.'

The quotations from Richardson are at least eighty in number; almost all of which are from his Clarissa."

"Dr. Brocklesby[2], a few days before the death of Dr. Johnson, found on the table Dr. Kippis's account of the Disputes of the Royal Society. Dr. J. inquired of his physician if he had read it, who answered in the negative. 'You are at no loss, sir. It is poor stuff, indeed, a sad unscholar-like performance. I could not have believed that that man would have written so ill.' Green, v. xcii. p. 592.

"He then said, 'Dr. Brocklesby, do you think there is a possibility that I should recover?' 'What nature may do I cannot say, but art has done her utmost.' 'How long do you think I may live?' 'I cannot precisely say, perhaps a few days.' 'That is honest and friendly. Do you think I can live a week?' 'No.' 'Do you think I can live

[1] [It was Mr. Langton who related it, on the authority of J. G. Cooper. See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 336.—ED.]

[2] [This and the four following anecdotes are told by Mr. Green of Lichfield. See *ante*, v. iii. p. 353.—ED.]

Green. six days?' 'Perhaps so.' 'Then I will take no more physic; and now you will say I have killed myself[1].'

"Being desired to call in Dr. Warren, he said, 'they might call in any body they pleased;' and Warren was called. At his going away, 'You have come in,' said Dr. Johnson, 'at the eleventh hour; but you shall be paid the same with your fellow-labourers. Francis, put into Dr. Warren's coach a copy of the English Poets.'

"Some years before, some person in a company at Salisbury, of which Dr. Johnson was one, vouched for the company, that there was nobody in it afraid of death—'Speak for yourself, sir; for indeed I am.' 'I did not say of *dying*,' replied the other; 'but of death, meaning its consequences.' 'And so I mean,' rejoined the doctor; 'I am very seriously afraid of the consequences.'"

Gent. Mag. v. lxi. p. 500. "Mr. Nichols was present when Mr. Henderson, the actor, had the honour of being introduced to Dr. Johnson, and was highly entertained by the interview. The conversation turning on the merits of a certain dramatic writer, Johnson said, 'I never did the man an injury; but he would persist in reading his tragedy to me.' When Henderson was taking his leave, he invited him with much earnestness to come again frequently. 'The oftener you call on me, sir, the more welcome will your visits be.'"

"A literary lady, expressing to Dr. Johnson her approbation of his Dictionary, and, in particular, her satisfaction at his not having admitted into it any *improper words*—'No, madam,' replied he; 'I hope I have not daubed my fingers. I find, however, that you have been looking for them.'

"Boswell, in his minute and entertaining account of Johnson's Life, has omitted to mention, that, when the Doctor first came to London with his pupil, Garrick, they borrowed five pounds on their joint note of Mr. Wilcocks, the bookseller in the Strand."

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p. 1163. "The mention of Johnson's name," writes Sir Joseph Mawbey, "reminds me of an anecdote of him which I had from Garrick, with whom I belonged to a summer club for many years (till he died), first held at the assembly-house at Walton Bridge, and afterwards at Hampton. I believe Mr. Boswell does not mention this anecdote in his account of Johnson.

"Whilst Johnson was sitting in one of the coffeehouses at Oxford, about the time when he had a doctor's degree conferred on him by the University, some young men approached him with a view to entertainment. They knew the subject of Scotch poetry and Scotch literature would call him forth. They talked of Ossian, and Home's

[1] [See *ante*, vol. v. p. 331.—Ed.]

tragedy of Douglas; and one of them repeated some verses from the latter; after which he called out, 'There's imagery for you, Dr. Johnson! There's description! Did you ever know any man write like that?' Johnson replied, with that tone of voice and motion of head and body for which he was remarkable, and which Garrick used to mimick inimitably, 'Yes, sir, many a man, many a woman, and many a child[1].'"

"The first visit Goldsmith ever received from Dr. Johnson was on May 31, 1761[2]; when he gave an invitation to him and much other company, many of them literary men, to a supper in his lodgings. Dr. Percy, bishop of Dromore, one of the company then invited, being intimate with the great lexicographer, was desired to call upon him and take him with him. As they went together, the former was much struck with the studied neatness of Johnson's dress. He had on a new suit of clothes, a new wig nicely powdered, and every thing about him so perfectly dissimilar from his usual habits and appearance, that his companion could not help inquiring the cause of this singular transformation. 'Why, sir,' said Johnson, 'I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency by quoting my practice, and I am desirous this night to show him a better example.'" Life of Golds.

"Dr. Johnson's friendship for Mrs. Elizabeth Aston[3] commenced at the palace in Lichfield, the residence of Mr. Walmesley: with Mrs. Gastrel he became acquainted in London, at the house of her brother-in-law, Mr. Hervey. During the Doctor's annual visits to his daughter-in-law, Lucy Porter, he spent much of his time at Stow-hill, where Mrs. Gastrel and Mrs. Elizabeth Aston resided. They were the daughters of Sir Thomas Aston, of Aston-Hall in Cheshire, of whom it is said, that being applied to for some account of his family, to illustrate the History of Cheshire, he replied, 'that the title and estate Rev. Mr. Parker.

[1] [I have quoted this anecdote solely with the view of showing to how little credit hearsay anecdotes are in general entitled. Here is a story published by Sir Joseph Mawbey, a member of the house of commons, and a person every way worthy of credit, who says he had it from Garrick. Now mark—Johnson's "visit to Oxford about the time of his doctor's degree" was in 1754, the first time he had been there since he left the university; but Douglas was not acted till 1756, and Ossian not published till 1760. Every one knows that Dr. Johnson said of Ossian that "many men, many women, and many children might have written it." All therefore that is new in Sir Joseph Mawbey's story is false. Mr. Tyers related the same story, *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1785, p. 86; but did not lay the scene with such minute *in*accuracy as Sir Joseph did.—Ed.]

[2] [It was also in this year, 1761, that Goldsmith published the "Vicar of Wakefield." (See *ante*, vol. i. p. 428. *n.*) This leads the editor to observe a more serious inaccuracy of Mrs. Piozzi than Mr. Boswell notices, when she says Johnson left her table to go and sell the "Vicar of Wakefield" for Goldsmith. Now Dr. Johnson was not acquainted with the Thrales till 1765, four years after the book had been published.—Ed.]

[3] [The following anecdotes are told by Mr. Parker from the relation of Mrs. Aston and her sister.—Ed.]

Rev. Mr. Parker.

had descended from father to son for thirty generations, and that he believed they were neither much richer nor much poorer than they were at first.'

"He used to say of Dr. Hunter, master of the free grammar school, Lichfield, that he never taught a boy in his life—he whipped and they learned. Hunter was a pompous man, and never entered the school without his gown and cassock, and his wig full dressed. He had a remarkably stern look, and Dr. Johnson said he could tremble at the sight of Miss Seward, she was so like her grandfather.

"Mrs. Gastrel was on a visit at Mr. Hervey's, in London, at the time that Johnson was writing the Rambler; the printer's boy would often come after him to their house, and wait while he wrote off a paper for the press in a room full of company. A great portion of the Lives of the Poets was written at Stow-hill; he had a table by one of the windows, which was frequently surrounded by five or six ladies engaged in work or conversation. Mrs. Gastrel had a very valuable edition of Bailey's Dictionary, to which he often referred. She told him that Miss Seward said that he had made poetry of no value by his criticism. 'Why, my dear lady,' replied he, 'if silver is dirty, it is not the less valuable for a good scouring.'

"A large party had one day been invited to meet the Doctor at Stow-hill; the dinner waited far beyond the usual hour, and the company were about to sit down, when Johnson appeared at the great gate; he stood for some time in deep contemplation, and at length began to climb it, and, having succeeded in clearing it, advanced with hasty strides towards the house. On his arrival Mrs. Gastrel asked him, 'If he had forgotten that there was a small gate for foot passengers by the side of the carriage entrance.' 'No, my dear lady, by no means,' replied the Doctor; 'but I had a mind to try whether I could climb a gate now as I used to do when I was a lad.'

"One day Mrs. Gastrel set a little girl to repeat to him Cato's soliloquy, which she went through very correctly. The Doctor, after a pause, asked the child 'What was to bring Cato to an end?' She said it was a knife. 'No, my dear, it was not so.' 'My aunt Polly said it was a knife.' 'Why, aunt Polly's knife *may do*, but it was a *dagger*, my dear.' He then asked her the meaning of 'bane and antidote,' which she was unable to give. Mrs. Gastrel said, 'You cannot expect so young a child to know the meaning of such words.' He then said, 'My dear, how many pence are there in *sixpence*?' 'I cannot tell, sir,' was the half terrified reply. On this, addressing himself to Mrs. Gastrel, he said, 'Now, my dear lady, can any thing be more ridiculous than to teach a child Cato's soliloquy, who does not know how many pence there are in sixpence?'

"The ladies at Stow-hill would occasionally rebuke Dr. Johnson

for the indiscriminate exercise of his charity to all who applied for it. 'There was that woman,' said one of them, 'to whom you yesterday gave half-a-crown, why she was at church to-day in long sleeves and ribbons.' 'Well, my dear,' replied Johnson, 'and if it gave the woman pleasure, why should she not wear them?' Rev. Mr. Parker.

"He had long promised to write Mr. Walmesley's epitaph, and Mrs. W. waited for it, in order to erect a monument to her husband's memory; procrastination, however, one of the Doctor's few failings, prevented its being finished; he was engaged upon it in his last illness, and when the physicians, at his own request, informed him of his danger, he pushed the papers from before him, saying, 'It was too late to write the epitaph of another when he should so soon want one himself.'"

"The late Mr. Crauford, of Hyde-Park-corner[1], being engaged to dinner, where Dr. Johnson was to be, resolved to pay his court to him, and having heard that he preferred Donne's Satires to Pope's version of them, said, 'Do you know, Dr. Johnson, that I like Dr. Donne's original Satires better than Pope's.' Johnson said, 'Well, sir, I can't help that.' Ed.

"Miss Johnson, one of Sir Joshua's nieces (afterwards Mrs. Deane), was dining one day at her uncle's with Dr. Johnson and a large party: the conversation happening to turn on music, Johnson spoke very contemptuously of that art, and added, 'that no man of talent, or whose mind was capable of better things, ever would or could devote his time and attention to so idle and frivolous a pursuit.' The young lady, who was very fond of music, whispered her next neighbour, 'I wonder what Dr. Johnson thinks of King David.' Johnson overheard her, and, with great good humour and complacency, said, 'Madam, I thank you; I stand rebuked before you, and promise that, on one subject at least, you shall never hear me talk nonsense again.'

"The honours of the University of Cambridge were once[2] performed, to Dr. Johnson, by Dr. Watson, the late Bishop of Llandaff, and then Professor of Chemistry, &c. After having spent the morning in seeing all that was worthy of notice, the sage dined at his conductor's table, which was surrounded by various persons, all anxious to see so remarkable a character, but the moment was not favourable; he had been wearied by his previous exertions, and would not talk. After the party had dispersed he said, 'I was tired, and would not take the trouble, or I could have set them right upon several subjects, sir; for instance, the gentleman who said he could not imagine how any pleasure could be derived from hunting, the reason

[1] [Commonly called Fish Crauford.—Ed.]

[2] [Dr. Watson was a fellow of Trinity: see *ante*, vol. i. p. 500, an account of this visit to Cambridge, which occurred in Feb. 1765.—Ed.]

Ed. is, because man feels his own vacuity less in action than when at rest.'

"Mr. Williams, the Rector of Wellesbourne, in Warwickshire, mentioned having once, when a young man, performed a stage-coach journey with Dr. Johnson, who took his place in the vehicle, provided with a little book, which his companion soon discovered to be Lucian; he occasionally threw it aside, if struck by any remark made by his fellow travellers, and poured forth his knowledge and eloquence in a full stream, to the delight and astonishment of his auditors. Accidentally the first subject which attracted him was the digestive faculties of dogs, from whence he branched off as to the powers of digestion in various species of animals, discovering such stores of information, that this particular point might have been supposed to have formed his especial study, and so it was with every other subject started: the strength of his memory was not less astonishing than his eloquence; he quoted from various authors, either in support of his own argument or to confute those of his companions, as readily and, apparently, as accurately as if the works had been in his hands. The coach halted, as usual, for dinner, which seemed to be a deeply interesting business to Johnson, who vehemently attacked a dish of stewed carp, using his fingers only in feeding himself[1].

"Bishop Percy was at one time on a very intimate footing with Dr. Johnson, and the Doctor one day took Percy's[2] little daughter upon his knee, and asked her what she thought of 'Pilgrim's Progress?' The child answered that she had not read it. 'No,' replied the Doctor, 'then I would not give one farthing for you,' and he set her down and took no further notice of her."

Mrs. Rose[3]. "Dr. Mudge used to relate, as a proof of Dr. Johnson's quick discernment into character[4]:—When he was on a visit to Dr. Mudge at Plymouth, the inhabitants of the Dock (now Devonport) were very desirous of their town being supplied with water, to effect which it was necessary to obtain the consent of the corporation of Plymouth; this was obstinately refused, the Dock being considered as an upstart. And a rival, Alderman Tolcher, who took a very strong part, called one morning, and immediately opened on the subject to Dr. Johnson,

[1] [Mr. Boswell, *ante*, vol. v. p. 183, mentions another instance, in which Dr. Johnson surprised his accidental companions in a stage-coach with the force of his conversation and the goodness of his appetite.—Ed.]

[2] [Afterwards Mrs. Isted, of Ecton, Northamptonshire.—Ed.]

[3] [Mrs. Rose, who has obligingly communicated these anecdotes, is the daughter of Dr. Farr, of Plymouth, and the daughter-in-law of Dr. Johnson's old friend, Dr. Rose, of Chiswick.—Ed.]

[4] [This story is told by Mr. Boswell, and commented upon by Mr. Blakeway (*ante*, vol. i. p. 369), as if Dr. Johnson had *seriously* entered into the spirit of the contest; whereas Dr. Mudge, more naturally, represents him as *flattering*, with an ironical vehemence, the prejudices of the worthy alderman, who is known, from other circumstances, to have been of a very *zealous* disposition.—Ed.]

who appeared to give great attention, and, when the alderman had ceased speaking, replied, 'You are perfectly right, sir; I would let the rogues die of thirst, for I hate a Docker from my heart.' The old man went away quite delighted, and told all his acquaintances how completely 'the great Dr. Johnson was on *his* side of the question.' Mrs. Rose.

"It was after the publication of the Lives of the Poets that Dr. Farr, being engaged to dine with Sir Joshua Reynolds, mentioned, on coming in, that, in his way, he had seen a caricature, which he thought clever, of the nine muses flogging Dr. Johnson round Parnassus. The admirers of Gray and others, who thought their favourites hardly treated in the Lives, were laughing at Dr. Farr's account of the print, when Dr. Johnson was himself announced: Dr. Farr being the only stranger, Sir Joshua introduced him, and, to Farr's infinite embarrassment, repeated what he had just been telling them. Johnson was not at all surly on the occasion, but said, turning to Dr. Farr, 'Sir, I am very glad to hear this. I hope the day will never arrive when I shall neither be the object of calumny or ridicule, for then I shall be neglected and forgotten [1].'

"It was near the close of his life that two young ladies, who were warm admirers of his works, but had never seen himself, went to Bolt-court, and, asking if he was at home, were shown up stairs, where he was writing. He laid down his pen on their entrance, and, as they stood before him, one of the females repeated a speech of some length, previously prepared for the occasion. It was an enthusiastic effusion, which, when the speaker had finished, she panted for her idol's reply. What was her mortification when all he said was 'Fiddle-de-dee, my dear.'

"Much pains were taken by Mr. Hayley's friends to prevail on Dr. Johnson to read 'The Triumphs of Temper,' when it was in its zenith; at last he consented, but never got beyond the two first pages, of which he uttered a few words of contempt that I have now forgotten. They were, however, carried to the author, who revenged himself by pourtraying Johnson as *Rumble* in his comedy of 'The Mausoleuin,' and subsequently he published, without his name, a 'Dialogue in the Shades between Lord Chesterfield and Dr. Johnson,' more distinguished for malignity than wit. Being anonymous, and possessing very little merit, it fell still-born from the press [2].

[1] [This was his usual declaration on all such occasions. If Johnson had been an amateur author, abuse and even criticism would no doubt have given him pain, but, to an author by profession, and one who, for so many years, had lived by his pen, the greatest misfortune would be neglect; for his daily bread depended on the sensation his works might create (see *ante*, vol. iv. p. 244). This observation will be found applicable to many other cases.—Ed.]

[2] [See *ante*, vol. v. p. 240, where it will be seen that, besides the character of *Rumble* and the *Dead* Dialogue, Hayley vented his spleen in a correspondence with Miss Seward,

Mrs. Rose. "Dr. Johnson sent his 'Life of Lord Lyttleton' in MSS. to Mrs. Montague, who was much dissatisfied with it, and thought her friend every way underrated, but the Doctor made no alteration. When he subsequently made one of a party at Mrs. Montague's, he addressed his hostess two or three times after dinner, with a view to engage her in conversation: receiving only cold and brief answers, he said, in a low voice, to General Paoli, who sat next him, and who told me the story; 'You see, sir, I am no longer the man for Mrs. Montague.'

"Mrs. Piozzi related to me, that when Dr. Johnson one day observed, that poets in general preferred some one couplet they had written to any other, she replied, that she did not suppose he had a favourite; he told her she was mistaken—he thought his best lines were:—

'The encumber'd oar scarce leaves the hostile coast,
Through purple billows and a floating host[1].'"

Parr. "Dr. Johnson[2], in his conversation with Dr. Parr, repeatedly and earnestly avowed his opinion, that accents ought not to be omitted by any editor of Greek authors, or any modern writers of Greek verse, or Greek prose.

"Johnson said Gray 'walked on tiptoe.' The same thought is in Quintilian and in Seneca, 'quo quisque ingenio minus valet, hoc se magis attolere et dilitare conatur: ut *statura breves in digitos* eriguntur, et plura infirmi mirantur.'—Quintilian, by Rollin, Lib. ii. cap. 3. Seneca also says, 'in edito stat admirabilis, celsus, magnitudinis veræ. Non exsurgit in plantas, nec summis ambulat digitis, eorum more, qui mendacio staturam adjuvant, longioresque quam sunt, videri volunt: contentus est magnitudine suâ.'—Epist. iii.

"'A wit among lords and a lord among wits,' said Johnson of Lord Chesterfield. 'Sed tam contumeliosos in se ridet invicem eloquentia: et qui stultis eruditi videri volunt, stulti eruditis videntur.'—Quintilian, by Rollin, pa. 409, Lib. x. cap. vii. See also Pope's Dunciad:

'A wit with dunces, and a dunce with wits.'"

Mr. Barclay. "Mr. Barclay[3], from his connexion with Mr. Thrale, had several opportunities of meeting and conversing with Dr. Johnson. On his becoming a partner in the brewery, Johnson advised him not to allow his commercial pursuits to divert his attention from his studies. 'A

which that lady, or some of her confidants, chose to publish, and which, instead of affecting the reputation of Dr. Johnson, only cover the names of the two writers with indelible ridicule.—Ed.]

[1] [These lines are in the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, line 192.—Ed.]

[2] [These three anecdotes, or rather memoranda of Dr. Parr's, were communicated by his biographer, Dr. Johnstone, of Birmingham.—Ed.]

[3] [The late Robert Barclay, Esq. of Bury Hill, near Dorking. This benevolent and excellent man (from whom Mr. Markland derived these memoranda in 1824) died in 1831, at an advanced age.—Ed.]

mere literary man,' said the Doctor, 'is a *dull* man; a man, who is solely a man of business, is a *selfish* man; but when literature and commerce are united, they make a *respectable* man.' Mr. Barclay.

"Mr. Barclay saw Johnson ten days before he died, when the latter observed, 'That they should never meet more. Have you any objection to receive an old man's blessing?' Mr. Barclay knelt down, and Johnson gave him his blessing with great fervency.

"Mr. Barclay had never observed any rudeness or violence on the part of Johnson.

"He has seen Boswell lay down his knife and fork, and take out his tablets, in order to register a good anecdote.

"When Johnson proceeded to the dining-room, one of Mr. Thrale's servants handed him a wig of a smarter description than the one he wore in the morning; the exchange took place in the hall, or passage. Johnson, like many other men, was always in much better humour *after* dinner than *before* [1]."

"With all that asperity of manners with which he has been charged, and which kept at a distance many who, to my knowledge, would have been glad of an intimacy with him, he possessed the affections of pity and compassion in a most eminent degree. In a mixed company, of which I was one, the conversation turned on the pestilence which raged in London in the year 1665, and gave occasion to Johnson to speak of Dr. Nathaniel Hodges, who, in the height of that calamity, continued in the city, and was almost the only one of his profession that had the courage to oppose the endeavours of his art to the spreading of the contagion. It was the hard fate of this person, a short time after, to die a prisoner for debt in Ludgate. Johnson related this circumstance to us, with the tears ready to start from his eyes, and with great energy said, 'Such a man would not have been suffered to perish in these times.'" Sir J. Hawk. Life, p. 51.

"On Johnson's death, Mr. Langton said to Sir John Hawkins, 'We shall now know whether he has or has not assisted Sir Joshua in his Discourses;' but Johnson had assured Sir John that his assistance had never exceeded the substitution of a word or two, in preference to what Sir Joshua had written. Miss Hawk. Mem. vol. i. p. 333.

"What the economy of Dr. Johnson's house may have been under his wife's administration I cannot tell, but under Miss Williams's management, and, indeed, afterwards, when he was overcome at the misery of those around him, it always deceived my expectation, as far as the condition of the apartment into which I was admitted could enable me to judge. It was not, indeed, his study; amongst vol. ii. p. 208.

[1] [See *ante*, v. iv. p. 184.—Ed.]

Miss Hawk. Mem. vol. ii. p. 143.

his books he probably might bring Magliabeechi to recollection, but I saw him only in the decent drawing-room of a house, not inferior to others on the same local situation, and with stout old-fashioned mahogany table and chairs. He was a liberal customer to his tailor, and I can remember that his linen was often a strong contrast to the colour of his hands.

"It may be said of Johnson, that he had a *peculiar* feeling of regard towards his many and various friends, and that he was to each what might be called the *indenture*, or counter-part of what they were to him."

Steevens London Mag. vol. lv. p. 253.

"Dr. Johnson[1] confessed himself to have been sometimes in the power of bailiffs. Richardson, the author of Clarissa, was his constant friend on such occasions. 'I remember writing to him,' said Johnson, 'from a sponging house; and was so sure of my deliverance through his kindness and liberality, that, before his reply was brought, I knew I could afford to joke with the rascal who had me in custody, and did so, over a pint of adulterated wine, for which, at that instant, I had no money to pay.'

"It has been observed that Johnson had lost the sight of one of his eyes. Mr. Ellis, an ancient gentleman now living (author of a very happy burlesque translation of the thirteenth book added to the Æneid by Maffée Vegio) was in the same condition; but, some years after, while he was at Margate, the sight of his eye unexpectedly returned, and that of its fellow became as suddenly extinguished. Concerning the particulars of this singular but authenticated event, Dr. Johnson was studiously inquisitive, and not with reference to his own case. Though he never made use of glasses to assist his sight, he said he could recollect no production of art to which man has superior obligations. He mentioned the name of the original inventor[2] of spectacles with reverence, and expressed his wonder that not an individual, out of the multitudes who had profited by them, had, through gratitude, written the life of so great a benefactor to society.

"The doctor is known to have been, like Savage, a very late visiter; yet at whatever hour he returned, he never went to bed without a previous call on Mrs Williams, the blind lady who for so many

[1] [The following anecdotes, published by Mr. Steevens, from day to day in the *St. James's Chronicle*, and afterwards collected in the *London Magazine*, escaped the editor's notice, till it was too late to introduce them into the text; but as they tell some new facts, and relate others that have been already told in a new manner, it has been thought right to preserve them. The first of these anecdotes confirms the justice which the editor had already endeavoured to do to the memory of Richardson against the sneer of Murphy. *Ante*, v. i. p. 290, *n.*—Ed.]

[2] The inventor of spectacles is said to have been a monk at Pisa, who lived at the end of the thirteenth century, and whose name was Spina.—Ed. *of Lond. Mag.*

years had found protection under his roof. Coming home one morning between four and five, he said to her, 'Take notice, madam, that for once I am here before others are asleep. As I turned into the court, I ran against a knot of bricklayers.' 'You forget, my dear sir,' replied she, 'that these people have all been a-bed, and are now preparing for their day's work.' 'Is it so, then, madam? I confess that circumstance had escaped me.' Steevens, London Mag. vol. lv. p. 254.

"'I have been told, Dr. Johnson,' says a friend, 'that your translation of Pope's Messiah was made either as a common exercise or as an imposition for some negligence you had been guilty of at college.' 'No, sir,' replied the doctor. 'At Pembroke the former were always in prose, and to the latter I would not have submitted. I wrote it rather to show the tutors what I could do, than what I was willing should be done. It answered my purpose; for it convinced those who were well enough inclined to punish me, that I could wield a scholar's weapon, as often as I was menaced with arbitrary inflictions. Before the frequency of personal satire had weakened its effect, the petty tyrants of colleges stood in awe of a pointed remark, or a vindictive epigram. But since every man in his turn has been wounded, no man is ashamed of a scar.'

"When Dr. Percy first published his collection of ancient English ballads, perhaps he was too lavish in commendation of the beautiful simplicity and poetic merit he supposed himself to discover in them. This circumstance provoked Johnson to observe one evening at Miss Reynolds's tea-table, that he could rhyme as well, and as elegantly, in common narrative and conversation. For instance, says he,

'As with my hat upon my head
I walk'd along the Strand,
I there did meet another man
With his hat in his hand[1].

'Or, to render such poetry subservient to my own immediate use,

'I therefore pray thee, Renny dear,
That thou will give to me,
With cream and sugar soften'd well,
Another dish of tea.

'Nor fear that I, my gentle maid,
Shall long detain the cup,
When once unto the bottom I
Have drank the liquor up.

[1] [See *ante*, v. iv. p. 137, where this anecdote is told in the vague manner and on the imperfect authority of Mr. Cradock. To have deliberately composed and circulated a parody on his friend's poem would have been a very different thing from a sportive *improvisation* over the tea-table.—Ed.]

Steevens London Mag. vol. lv. p. 255.

'Yet hear, alas! this mournful truth,
Nor hear it with a frown;—
Thou canst not make the tea so fast
As I can gulp it down.'

And thus he proceeded through several more stanzas, till the reverend critic cried out for quarter. Such ridicule, however, was unmerited.

"'Night,' Mr. Tyers has told us, 'was Johnson's time for composition.' But this assertion, if meant for a general one, can be refuted by living evidence. Almost the whole preface to Shakspeare, and no inconsiderable part of the Lives of the Poets, were composed by daylight, and in a room where a friend [1] was employed by him in other investigations. His studies were only continued through the night when the day had been preoccupied, or proved too short for his undertakings. Respecting the fertility of his genius, the resources of his learning, and the accuracy of his judgment, the darkness and the light were both alike.

"'Mrs. Thrale,' Mr. Tyers also reports, 'knew how to spread a table with the utmost plenty and elegance;' but all who are acquainted with this lady's domestic history must know, that in the present instance Mr. Tyers' praise of her is unluckily bestowed. Her husband superintended every dinner set before his guests. After his death she confessed her total ignorance in culinary arrangements. Poor Thrale studied an art of which he loved the produce, and to which he expired a martyr. Johnson repeatedly, and with all the warmth of earnest friendship, assured him he was *nimis edax rerum*, and that such unlimited indulgence of his palate would precipitate his end.

"When in his latter years he was reminded of his forcible sarcasm against Bolingbroke and Mallet (v. i. p. 255), the doctor exclaimed, 'Did I really say so?' 'Yes, sir.' He replied, 'I am heartily glad of it.'

"'You knew Mr. Capel [2], Dr. Johnson?' 'Yes, sir; I have seen him at Garrick's.' 'And what think you of his abilities?' 'They are just sufficient, sir, to enable him to select the black hairs from the white ones, for the use of the perriwig makers. Were he and I to count the grains in a bushel of wheat for a wager, he would certainly prove the winner.'

"When one Collins, a sleep-compelling divine of Hertfordshire, with the assistance of counsellor Hardinge [3], published a heavy half-crown pamphlet against Mr. Steevens, Garrick asked the doctor

[1] [Mr. Steevens himself.—Ed.]
[2] [The annotator of Shakspeare.—Ed.]
[3] [George Hardinge.—Ed.]

what he thought of this attack on his coadjutor. 'I regard Collins's performance,' replied Johnson, 'as a great gun without powder or shot.' When the same Collins afterwards appeared as editor of Capel's posthumous notes on Shakspeare, with a preface of his own, containing the following words—'A sudden and most severe stroke of affliction has left my mind too much distracted to be capable of engaging in such a task (that of a further attack on Mr. Steevens), though I am prompted to it by inclination as well as duty,' the doctor asked to what misfortune the foregoing words referred. Being told that the critic had lost his wife, Johnson added, 'I believe that the loss of teeth may deprave the voice of a singer, and that lameness will impede the motions of a dancing master, but I have not yet been taught to regard the death of a wife as the grave of literary exertions. When my dear Mrs. Johnson expired, I sought relief in my studies, and strove to lose the recollection of her in the toils of literature. Perhaps, however, I wrong the feelings of this poor fellow. His wife might have held the pen in his name. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.* Nay, I think I observe, throughout his two pieces, a woman's irritability, with a woman's impotence of revenge.' Yet such were Johnson's tender remembrances of his own wife, that after her death, though he had a whole house at command, he would study nowhere but in a garret. Being asked the reason why he chose a situation so incommodious, he answered, 'Because in that room only I never saw Mrs. Johnson.' Steevens London Mag. vol. lv. p. 258.

"'Though you brought a tragedy, sir, to Drury-lane, and at one time were so intimate with Garrick, you never appeared to have much theatrical acquaintance.' 'Sir, while I had, in common with other dramatic authors, the liberty of the scenes, without considering my admission behind them as a favour, I was frequently at the theatre. At that period all the wenches knew me, and dropped me a curtsy as they passed on to the stage. But since poor Goldsmith's last comedy [1], I scarce recollect having seen the inside of a playhouse. To speak the truth, there is small encouragement there for a man whose sight and hearing are become so imperfect as mine. I may add, that, Garrick and Henderson excepted, I never met with a performer who had studied his art, or could give an intelligible reason for what he did [2].'

"On the night before the publication of the first edition of his Shakspeare, he supped with some friends in the Temple, who kept him up, 'nothing loth,' till past five the next morning. Much pleasantry was passing on the subject of commentatorship, when, all on a sudden, the doctor, looking at his watch, cried out, 'This is sport

[1] [See *ante*, p. 401.—Ed.]

[2] [This was probably before his acquaintance with Mr. Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, which took place only the year before his death, vol. v. p. 130.—Ed.]

Steevens London Mag. vol. lv. p. 346.

to you, gentlemen; but you do not consider there are at most only four hours between me and criticism.'

"Once, and but once, he is known to have had too much wine; a circumstance which he himself discovered, on finding one of his sesquipedalian words hang fire. He then started up, and gravely observed, 'I think it time we should go to bed.'

"If 'a little learning is a dangerous thing' on any speculative subject, it is eminently more so in the practical science of physic. Johnson was too frequently his own doctor. In October, just before he came to London, he had taken an unusual dose of squills, but without effect. He swallowed the same quantity on his arrival here, and it produced a most violent operation. He did not, as he afterwards confessed, reflect on the difference between the perished and inefficacious vegetable he found in the country, and the fresh and potent one of the same kind he was sure to meet with in town. 'You find me at present,' says he, 'suffering from a prescription of my own. When I am recovered from its consequences, and not till then, I shall know the true state of my natural malady.' From this period, he took no medicine without the approbation of Heberden. What follows is known by all, and by all lamented—ere now perhaps—even by the prebends of Westminster [1].

"Johnson asked one of his executors, a few days before his death, 'Where do you intend to bury me?' He answered, 'In Westminster Abbey.' 'Then,' continued he, 'if my friends think it worth while to give me a stone, let it be placed over me so as to protect my body.'

p. 401.

"On the Monday after his decease he was interred in Westminster Abbey. The corpse was brought from his house in Bolt-court to the hearse, preceded by the Rev. Mr. Butt and the Rev. Mr. Strahan, about twelve o'clock. The following was the order of the procession;

"Hearse and six.

"The executors, viz. Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and William Scott, LL. D. in a coach and four.

"Eight coaches and four, containing the Literary Club, and others of the doctor's friends, invited by the executors; viz. Dr. Burney, Mr. Malone, Mr. Steevens, the Rev. Mr. Strahan, Mr. Ryland, Mr. Hoole, Dr. Brocklesby, Mr. Cruikshanks, Mr. Nichols, Mr. Low, Mr. Paradise, General Paoli, Count Zenobia, Dr. Butter, Mr. Holder, Mr. Seward, Mr. Metcalf, Mr. Sastres, Mr. Des Moulins, the Rev. Mr. Butt, Dr. Horsley, Dr. Farmer, Dr. Wright; to whom may be added, Mr. Cooke (who was introduced by Dr. Brocklesby), and the doctor's faithful servant, Francis Barber.

[1] [This sarcasm against the *prebendaries* of Westminster, and particularly against Johnson's friend Dr. Taylor, who was one of them, will be explained presently.—Ed.]

"Two coaches and four, containing the pall-bearers, viz. Mr. Burke, Mr. Wyndham, Sir Charles Bunbury, Sir Joseph Banks, Mr. Colman, and Mr. Langton. Steevens London Mag. vol. lv. p. 402.

"After these followed two mourning coaches and four, filled with gentlemen who, as volunteers, honoured themselves by attending this funeral. These were the Rev. Mr. Hoole, the Rev. Mr. East, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Mickle, Mr. Sharp, Mr. C. Burney, and Mr. G. Nichol.

"Thirteen gentlemen's carriages closed the procession, which reached the Abbey a little before one.

"The corpse was met at the west door by the prebendaries in residence, to the number of six, in their surplices and doctor's hoods; and the officers of the church, and attendants on the funeral, were then marshalled in the following order:

"Two vergers.
The Rev. Mr. Strahan.
The Rev. Mr. Butt.
THE BODY.
Sir Joshua Reynolds, as chief mourner and an executor.
Sir John Hawkins and Dr. Scott, as executors.
The rest two and two.

"The body then proceeded to the south cross, and, in view of the three executors, was deposited by the side of Mr. Garrick, with the feet opposite to the monument of Shakspeare.

"The Rev. Dr. Taylor performed the burial service, attended by some gentlemen of the Abbey; but it must be regretted by all who continue to reverence the hierarchy, that the cathedral service was withheld [1] from its invariable friend; and the omission was truly offensive to the audience at large."

[1] How this omission happened, we are unable to account. Perhaps the executors should have asked for it; but at all events it should have been performed. That the fees for opening the ground were paid, was a matter of indispensable necessity; and there can be no doubt, from the liberality of the present dean and chapter, but they will be returned, as was offered in the case of Dryden, and was done in that of St. Evremond, who "died," says Atterbury, "renouncing the christian religion;" yet the church of Westminster thought fit, in honour to his memory, to give his body room in the Abbey, and allow him to be buried there *gratis*, so far as the chapter were concerned, though he left 800*l.* sterling behind him, which is thought every way an unaccountable piece of management. How striking the contrast between St. Evremond and Johnson!—STEEVENS. [See *ante*, vol. v. p. 352, Mr. Tyers's note. It is supposed that the fees were *not* returned, and it is to be added, that all Dr. Johnson's friends, but especially Mr. Malone and Mr. Steevens, were indignant at the mean and selfish spirit which the dean and chapter exhibited on this occasion; but they were especially so against Dr. Taylor, not only for not having prevailed on his colleagues to show more respect to his old friend, but for the unfeeling manner in which he himself performed the burial service. It must, on the other hand, be confessed that Lord St. Helens corroborates the suspicion noticed by Mr. Boswell (*ante*, vol. iv. p. 32), that Johnson's attention to Taylor was prompted rather by the hopes of a legacy than by any very sincere friendship; for his lordship says that it was well known at Ashbourne that

Letters, vol. i. p. 232.

"When Mrs. Thrale was going to visit some country friends, Dr. Johnson gave her the following excellent advice: 'Do not make them speeches. Unusual compliments, to which there is no stated and prescriptive answer, embarrass the feeble, who know not what to say, and disgust the wise, who, knowing them to be false, suspect them to be hypocritical.'

vol. ii. p. 386.

"[1] Dr. Johnson was no complainer of ill usage. I never heard him even lament the disregard shown to Irene, which however was a violent favourite with him; and much was he offended when having asked me once, 'what single scene afforded me most pleasure of all our tragic drama,' I, little thinking of *his* play's existence, named, perhaps with hasty impropriety, 'the dialogue between Syphax and Juba, in Addison's Cato.' 'Nay, nay,' replied he, 'if you are for declamation, I hope my two ladies have the better of them all.' This piece, however, lay dormant many years, *shelfed* (in the manager's phrase) from the time Mr. Peter Garrick presented it first on Fleetwood's table, to the hour when his brother David obtained due influence on the theatre, on which it crawled through nine nights, *supported by cordials*, but never obtaining popular applause. I asked him then to name a better scene; he pitched on that between Horatio and Lothario, in Rowe's Fair Penitent; but Mr. Murphy showed him afterwards that it was borrowed from Massinger, and had not the merit of originality.

p. 381.

"He was once angry with his friend Dr. Taylor of Ashbourne, for recommending to him a degree of temperance, by which alone his life could have been saved, and recommending it in his own unaltered phrase too, with praiseworthy intentions to impress it more forcibly. This quarrel, however, if quarrel it might be called, which was mere sullenness on one side and sorrow on the other, soon healed of itself, mutual reproaches having never been permitted to widen the breach, and supply, as is the common practice among coarser disputants, the original and perhaps almost forgotten cause of dispute:

Taylor used to contrive to let some of his familiar friends discover, *as if by accident*, that he had remembered them in his will; and there was reason to suppose that he had for some time practised a similar device upon Johnson. It seems certain that the intercourse between these old friends, never very cordial or well assorted, had become less frequent in the latter years of Johnson's life; and that Taylor was not seen at the death-bedside, nor honoured by a legacy of remembrance in the will of his oldest friend.—The following passage, in one of Dr. Johnson's letters to Mrs. Thrale, which no doubt relates to Dr. Taylor, gives us no great idea of his elegance or literature, nor of Johnson's regard for him:—"[Taylor] has let out another pound of blood, and is come to town, brisk and vigorous, fierce and fell, to drive on his law-suit. Nothing in all life now can be *more profligater than what he is; and if in case that so be, that they persist for to resist him, he is resolved not to spare no money, nor no time.* He is, I believe, thundering away. His solicitor has turned him off; and I think it not unlikely that he will tire his lawyers. But now don't you talk."—Ed.]

[1] [Some scattered anecdotes by Mrs. Piozzi having been by mistake omitted in what might have been a fitter place, are added here that the collection may be complete.—Ed.]

After some weeks, Johnson sent to request the sight of his old companion, whose feeble health held him away for some weeks more, and who, when he came, urged that feebleness as an excuse for appearing no sooner at the call of friendship in distress; but Johnson, who was then, as he expressed it, not sick but dying, told him a story of a lady, who many years before lay expiring in such tortures as that cruel disease, a cancer, naturally produces, and begged the conversation of her earliest intimate to soothe the incredible sufferings of her body, and relieve the approaching terrors of her mind; but what was the friend's apology for absence? 'Oh, my dear,' said she, 'I have really been so plagued and so pained of late by a nasty whitlow, that indeed it was quite impossible for me till to-day to attend my Lucy's call.' I think this was not more than two days before his dissolution. Letters, vol. ii. p. 382.

"Some Lichfield friends fancied that he had half a mind to die where he was born, but that the hope of being buried in Westminster Abbey overpowered the inclination; but Dr. Johnson loved London, and many people then in London, whom I doubt not he sincerely wished to see again, particularly Mr. Sastres [1], for whose person some of the following letters manifest a strong affection, and of whose talents I have often heard him speak with great esteem. That gentleman has told me, that his fears of death ended with his hope of recovery, and that the latter days of his life passed in calm resignation to God's will, and a firm trust in his mercy.

"He burned many letters in the last week, I am told; and those written by his mother drew from him a flood of tears, when the paper they were written on was all consumed. Mr. Sastres saw him cast a melancholy look upon their ashes, which he took up and examined, to see if a word was still legible. Nobody has ever mentioned what became of Miss Aston's letters, though he once told me himself they should be the last papers he would destroy, and added these lines with a very faltering voice:

> 'Then from his closing eyes thy form shall part,
> And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart;
> Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
> The muse forgot, and thou beloved no more.'"

In addition to his pleasantry about the French academy (vol. i. p. 160), it may be told, that when some person complimented him on his superiority to the French, he replied, "Why, what could you expect, dear sir, from fellows that eat frogs?" Piozzi, Anec. p. 41.

[1] [Sastres was the countryman and friend of Piozzi, and the lady therefore wishes to attribute to Dr. Johnson an extraordinary fondness for Signior Sastres, as if it gave some degree of countenance to her own miserable folly.—Ed.]

Piozzi, Anec. p. 46. "When Mr. Rose, of Hammersmith[1], contending for the preference of Scotch writers over the English, after having set up his authors like nine-pins, while the Doctor kept bowling them down again; at last, to make sure of victory, he named Ferguson upon Civil Society, and praised the book for being written in a *new* manner. 'I do not, said Johnson, 'perceive the value of this new manner; it is only like Buckinger[2], who had no hands, and so wrote with his feet.'

p. 61. "When I (Mrs. Piozzi,) knowing what subject he would like best to talk on, asked him how his opinion stood towards the question between Pascal and Soame Jennings about number and numeration? as the French philosopher observes, that infinity, though on all sides astonishing, appears most so when connected with the idea of number; for the notions of infinite number, and infinite number we know there is, stretches one's capacity still more than the idea of infinite space: 'such a notion indeed,' adds Pascal, 'can scarcely find room in the human mind.' The English author on the other hand exclaims, 'Let no man give himself leave to talk about infinite number, for infinite number is a contradiction in terms; whatever is once numbered we all see cannot be infinite.' 'I think,' said Dr. Johnson after a pause, 'we must settle the matter thus: numeration is certainly infinite, for eternity might be employed in adding unit to unit; but every number is in itself finite, as the possibility of doubling it easily proves: besides, stop at what point you will, you find yourself as far from infinitude as ever.'

p. 70. "His spirit of devotion had an energy that affected all who ever saw him pray in private. The coldest and most languid hearers of the word must have felt themselves animated by his manner of reading the Holy Scriptures; and to pray by his sick bed required strength of body as well as of mind, so vehement were his manners, and his tones of voice so pathetic.

"Though Dr. Johnson kept fast in Lent, particularly the holy week, with a rigour very dangerous to his general health; and had left off wine (for religious motives as I always believed, though he did not own it), yet he did not hold the commutation of offences by voluntary penance, or encourage others to practise severity upon themselves. He even once said, 'that he thought it an error to endeavour at pleasing God by taking the rod of reproof out of his hands[3].'

p. 106. "Mr. Thrale had a very powerful influence over the Doctor, and could make him suppress many rough answers: he could likewise prevail on him to change his shirt, his coat, or his plate, almost before it came indispensably necessary.

[1] [It is presumed that Mrs. Piozzi meant Dr. Rose, of Chiswick.—Ed.]

[2] [A person born without hands, who contrived to produce very fine specimens of penmanship.—Ed.]

[3] [He certainly left it off on account of his health, but no doubt considered it a pious duty to do so, if it disordered his mind. *Ante*, vol. ii. p. 8.—Ed.]

"He once observed of a Scotch lady who had given him some kind of provocation by receiving him with less attention than he expected, that she resembled a dead nettle; if she were alive she would sting." Piozzi, Anec. p. 132.

He rejected from his Dictionary every authority for a word "that could only be gleaned from writers dangerous to religion or morality —'I would not,' said he, 'send people to look in a book for words, that by such a casual seizure of the mind might chance to mislead it for ever.' p. 140.

"Dr. Johnson never gave into ridiculous refinements either of speculation or practice, or suffered himself to be deluded by specious appearances. 'I have had dust thrown in my eyes too often,' would he say, 'to be blinded so. Let us never confound matters of belief with matters of opinion.' Some one urged in his presence the preference of hope to possession; and, as I remember, produced an Italian sonnet on the subject. 'Let us not,' cried Johnson, 'amuse ourselves with subtilties and sonnets, when speaking about that *hope*, which is the follower of faith and the precursor of eternity; but if you only mean those air-built hopes which to-day excites and to-morrow will destroy, let us talk away, and remember that we only talk of the pleasures of hope; we feel those of possession, and no man in his senses would change the last for the first: such hope is a mere bubble, that by a gentle breath may be blown to what size you will almost, but a rough blast bursts it at once. Hope is an amusement rather than a good, and adapted to none but very tranquil minds.' p. 147.

"Of the pathetic in poetry he never liked to speak, and the only passage I ever heard him applaud as particularly tender in any common book was Jane Shore's exclamation in the last act, p. 154.

'Forgive me! *but* forgive me!'

"It was not however from the want of a susceptible heart that he hated to cite tender expressions, for he was more strongly and more violently affected by the force of words representing ideas capable of affecting him at all, than any other man in the world, I believe; and when he would try to repeat the celebrated *Prosa Ecclesiastica pro Mortuis*, as it is called, beginning *Dies iræ, Dies illa*, he could never pass the stanza ending thus, *Tantus labor non sit cassus*, without bursting into a flood of tears; which sensibility I used to quote against him when he would inveigh against devotional poetry, and protest that all religious verses were cold and feeble, and unworthy the subject, which ought to be treated with higher reverence, he said, than either poets or painters could presume to excite or bestow."

One of his friends had a daughter about fourteen years old, "fat and clumsy: and though the father adored, and desired others to adore her, yet being aware perhaps that she was not what the French p. 190.

Piozzi, Anec. p. 190. call *pétrie des graces*, and thinking, I suppose, that the old maxim, of beginning to laugh at yourself first where you have any thing ridiculous about you, was a good one, he comically enough called his girl *Trundle* when he spoke of her; and many who bore neither, of them any ill-will felt, disposed to laugh at the happiness of the appellation. 'See now,' said Dr. Johnson, 'what haste people are in to be hooted. Nobody ever thought of this fellow nor of his daughter, could he but have been quiet himself, and forborne to call the eyes of the world on his dowdy and her deformity. But it teaches one to see at least, that if nobody else will nickname one's children, the parents will e'en do it themselves.'

p. 198. "He had for many years a cat which he called Hodge, that kept always in his room at Fleet-street; but so exact was he not to offend the human species by superfluous attention to brutes, that when the creature was grown sick and old, and could eat nothing but oysters, Dr. Johnson always went out himself to buy Hodge's dinner, that Francis the black's delicacy might not be hurt, at seeing himself employed for the convenience of a quadruped."

p. 213. He was very fond of travelling, and would have gone "all over the world; for the very act of going forward was delightful to him; and he gave himself no concern about accidents, which he said never happened: nor did the running away of the horses on the edge of a precipice between Vernon and St. Denys in France convince him to the contrary; 'for nothing came of it,' he said, 'except that Mr. Thrale leaped out of the carriage into a chalk-pit, and then came up again, looking *as white!*' When the truth was, all our lives were saved by the greatest providence ever exerted in favour of three human creatures; and the part Mr. Thrale took from desperation was the likeliest thing in the world to produce broken limbs and death.

p. 215. "Yet danger in sickness he did not contemplate so steadily. One day, when he thought himself neglected by the non-attendance of Sir Richard Jebb, he conjured me to tell him what I thought of him, and I made him a steady, but as I thought a very gentle harangue, in which I confirmed all that the doctor had been saying, how no present danger could be expected; but that his age and continued ill health must naturally accelerate the arrival of that hour which can be escaped by none. 'And this,' said Johnson, rising in great anger, 'is the voice of female friendship, I suppose, when the hand of the hangman would be softer.'

"Another day, when he was ill, and exceedingly low-spirited, and persuaded that death was not far distant, I appeared before him in a dark-coloured gown, which his bad sight, and worse apprehensions, made him mistake for an iron grey. 'Why do you delight,' said he, 'thus to thicken the gloom of misery that surrounds me? is not here sufficient accumulation of horror without anticipated mourning?'

'This is not mourning, sir,' said I, drawing the curtain, that the light might fall upon the silk, and show it was a purple mixed with green. 'Well, well,' replied he, changing his voice, 'you little creatures should never wear those sort of clothes, however; they are unsuitable in every way. What! have not all insects gay colours?' Piozzi Anec. p. 216.

"He was no enemy to splendour of apparel, or pomp of equipage: 'Life,' he would say, 'is barren enough surely with all her trappings; let us therefore be cautious how we strip her.' In matters of still higher moment he once observed, when speaking on the subject of sudden innovation, 'He who plants a forest may doubtless cut down a hedge: yet I could wish methinks that even he would wait till he sees his young plants grow.' p. 231.

"His equity in giving the character of living acquaintance ought not undoubtedly to be omitted in his own, whence partiality and prejudice were totally excluded, and truth alone presided in his tongue: a steadiness of conduct the more to be commended, as no man had stronger likings or aversions. p. 234.

"When Mr. Thrale built the new library at Streatham, and hung up over the books the portraits of his favourite friends, that of Dr. Johnson was last finished, and closed the number." Upon this occasion Mrs. Thrale summed up Dr. Johnson's character in the following verses: p. 228.

"Gigantic in knowledge, in virtue, in strength,
Our company closes with Johnson at length;
So the Greeks from the cavern of Polypheme past,
When wisest, and greatest, Ulysses came last,
To his comrades contemptuous, we see him look down
On their wit and their worth with a general frown.
Since from Science' proud tree the rich fruit he receives,
Who could shake the whole trunk while they turn'd a few leaves.
His piety pure, his morality nice—
Protector of virtue, and terror of vice;
In these features Religion's firm champion display'd,
Shall make infidels fear for a modern crusade.
While th' inflammable temper, the positive tongue,
Too conscious of right for endurance of wrong,
We suffer from Johnson, contented to find,
That some notice we gain from so noble a mind;
And pardon our hurts, since so often we've found
The balm of instruction pour'd into the wound.
'Tis thus for its virtues the chemists extol
Pure rectified spirit, sublime alcohol:
From noxious putrescence, preservative pure,
A cordial in health, and in sickness a cure;
But exposed to the sun, taking fire at his rays,
Burns bright to the bottom, and ends in a blaze."

III.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. C. HICKMAN[1].

"This letter, on the occasion of the writer's being rejected on his application for the situation of usher to the grammar school at Stourbridge[2], has recently been printed, for the first time, from the original, by the editor of the 'Manchester Herald.'"—*Gentleman's Magazine.*

"Lichfield, 30th Oct. 1731.

Gent. Mag. v. lxxxiii. p. 18.

"SIR,—I have so long neglected to return you thanks for the favours and assistance I received from you at Stourbridge, that I am afraid you have now done expecting it. I can indeed make no apology, but by assuring you, that this delay, whatever was the cause of it, proceeded neither from forgetfulness, disrespect, nor ingratitude. Time has not made the sense of obligation less warm, nor the thanks I return less sincere. But while I am acknowledging one favour, I must beg another—that you would excuse the composition of the verses you desired. Be pleased to consider that versifying against one's inclination is the most disagreeable thing in the world; and that one's own disappointment is no inviting subject; and that though the desire of gratifying you might have prevailed over my dislike of it, yet it proves upon reflection so barren, that to attempt to write upon it, is to undertake to build without materials.

"As I am yet unemployed, I hope you will, if any thing should offer, remember and recommend, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. ELPHINSTON[3].

"20th April, 1749.

MS.

"SIR,—I have for a long time intended to answer the letter which you were pleased to send me, and know not why I have delayed it so long, but that I had nothing particular either of inquiry or information to send you; and the same reason might still have the same.

[1] [Probably the brother of the lady mentioned *ante*, v. i. p. 61.—ED.]

[2] [Dr. Johnson was at Stourbridge school, half-scholar, half-usher, in 1726; but it has not been stated that after his return from Oxford he attempted to become an assistant there. This letter, however, proves that he met in the summer of 1731 some disappointment at Stourbridge, and it was probably of the kind above stated. Yet that seems to be a strange subject for Mr. Hickman to have asked to see celebrated in a copy of verses. The editor can only repeat, that the years 1730 and 1731, during which Mr. Boswell erroneously imagined that Johnson was at Oxford, are an obscure and unexplained portion of his life. See *ante*, vol. i. p. 47.—ED.]

[3] [See *ante*, vol. i. p. 186.—ED.]

consequence, but I find in my recluse kind of life that I am not likely to have much more to say at one time than at another, and that therefore I may endanger by an appearance of neglect long continued, the loss of such an acquaintance as I know not where to supply. I therefore write now to assure you how sensible I am of the kindness you have always expressed to me, and how much I desire the cultivation of that benevolence which perhaps nothing but the distance between us has hindered from ripening before this time into friendship. Of myself I have very little to say, and of any body else less; let me however be allowed one thing, and that in my own favour—that I am, dear sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. GEORGE STRAHAN, AT SCHOOL. Rose MSS.

"19th Feb. [1763.]

"DEAR GEORGE,—I am glad that you have found the benefit of confidence, and hope you will never want a friend to whom you may safely disclose any painful secret. The state of your mind you had not so concealed but that it was suspected at home, which I mention that if any hint should be given you, it may not be imputed to me, who have told nothing but to yourself, who had told more than you intended.

"I hope you read more of Nepos, or of some other book, than you construe to Mr. Bright. The more books you look into for your entertainment, with the greater variety of style you will make yourself acquainted. Turner I do not know; but think that if Clark be better, you should change it, for I shall never be willing that you should trouble yourself with more than one book to learn the government of words. What book that one shall be, Mr. Bright must determine. Be but diligent in reading and writing, and doubt not of the success. Be pleased to make my compliments to Miss Page and the gentlemen. I am, dear sir, yours affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"26th March, 1763.

"DEAR SIR,—You did not very soon answer my letter, and therefore cannot complain that I make no great haste to answer yours. I am well enough satisfied with the proficiency that you make, and hope that you will not relax the vigour of your diligence. I hope you begin now to see that all is possible which was professed. Learning is a wide field, but six years spent in close application are a long time; and I am still of opinion, that if you continue to consider knowledge as the most pleasing and desirable of all acquisitions, and do not suffer your course to be interrupted, you may take your degree not only without deficiency, but with great distinction.

Rose MSS.

"You must still continue to write Latin. This is the most difficult part, indeed the only part that is very difficult of your undertaking. If you can exemplify the rules of syntax, I know not whether it will be worth while to trouble yourself with any more translations. You will more increase your number of words, and advance your skill in phraseology, by making a short theme or two every day; and when you have construed properly a stated number of verses, it will be pleasing to go from reading to composition, and from composition to reading. But do not be very particular about method; any method will do if there be but diligence. Let me know, if you please, once a week what you are doing. I am, dear George, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"16th April, 1763.

"DEAR SIR,—Your account of your proficience is more nearly equal, I find, to my expectations than your own. You are angry that a theme on which you took so much pains was at last a kind of English Latin; what could you expect more? If at the end of seven years you write good Latin, you will excel most of your contemporaries: Scribendo disces, scribere. It is only by writing ill that you can attain to write well. Be but diligent and constant, and make no doubt of success.

"I will allow you but six weeks for Tully's Offices. Walker's Particles I would not have you trouble yourself to learn at all by heart, but look in it from time to time and observe his notes and remarks, and see how they are exemplified. The translation from Clark's history will improve you, and I would have you continue it to the end of the book.

"I hope you read by the way at loose hours other books, though you do not mention them; for no time is to be lost; and what can be done with a master is but a small part of the whole. I would have you now and then try at some English verses. When you find that you have mistaken any thing, review the passage carefully and settle it in your mind.

"Be pleased to make my compliments, and those of Miss Williams, to all our friends. I am, dear sir, yours most affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"20th Sept. 1763.

"DEAR SIR,—I should have answered your last letter sooner if I could have given you any valuable or useful directions; but I knew not any way by which the composition of Latin verses can be much facilitated. Of the grammatical part which comprises the knowledge

of the measure of the foot, and quantity of the syllables, your grammar will teach you all that can be taught, and even of that you can hardly know any thing by rule but the measure of the foot. The quantity of syllables even of those for which rules are given is commonly learned by practice and retained by observation. For the poetical part, which comprises variety of expression, propriety of terms, dexterity in selecting commodious words, and readiness in changing their order, it will all be produced by frequent essays and resolute perseverance. The less help you have the sooner you will be able to go forward without help. Rose MSS.

"I suppose you are now ready for another author. I would not have you dwell longer upon one book than till your familiarity with its style makes it easy to you. Every new book will for a time be difficult. Make it a rule to write something in Latin every day; and let me know what you are now doing, and what your scheme is to do next. Be pleased to give my compliments to Mr. Bright, Mr. Stevenson, and Miss Page. I am, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE SAME.

"14th July, 1763.

"DEAR GEORGE,—To give pain ought always to be painful, and I am sorry that I have been the occasion of any uneasiness to you, to whom I hope never to [do] any thing but for your benefit or your pleasure. Your uneasiness was without any reason on your part, as you had written with sufficient frequency to me, and I had only neglected to answer them, because as nothing new had been proposed to your study, no new direction or incitement could be offered you. But if it had happened that you had omitted what you did not omit, and that I had for an hour, or a week, or a much longer time, thought myself put out of your mind by something to which presence gave that prevalence, which presence will sometimes give even where there is the most prudence and experience, you are not to imagine that my friendship is light enough to be blown away by the first cross blast, or that my regard or kindness hangs by so slender a hair as to be broken off by the unfelt weight of a petty offence. I love you, and hope to love you long. You have hitherto done nothing to diminish my good will, and though you had done much more than you have supposed imputed to you, my good will would not have been diminished.

"I write thus largely on this suspicion, which you have suffered to enter into your mind, because in youth we are apt to be too rigorous in our expectations, and to suppose that the duties of life are to be performed with unfailing exactness and regularity; but in our progress through life we are forced to abate much of our demands,

Rose MSS. and to take friends such as we can find them, not as we would make them.

"These concessions every wise man is more ready to make to others, as he knows that he shall often want them for himself; and when he remembers how often he fails in the observance of a cultivation of his best friends, is willing to suppose that his friends may in their turn neglect him, without any intention to offend him.

"When therefore it shall happen, as happen it will, that you or I have disappointed the expectation of the other, you are not to suppose that you have lost me, or that I intended to lose you; nothing will remain but to repair the fault, and to go on as if it never had been committed. I am, sir, your affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Reyn. MSS. "TO MISS REYNOLDS.

"Oxford, 27th Oct. [1763.]

"Your letter has scarcely come time enough to make an answer possible. I wish we could talk over the affair. I cannot go now. I must finish my book. I do not know Mr. Collier[1]. I have not money beforehand sufficient. How long have you known Collier, that you should put yourself into his hands? I once told you that ladies were timorous and yet not cautious.

"If I might tell my thoughts to one with whom they never had any weight, I should think it best to go through France. The expense is not great; I do not much like obligation, nor think the grossness of a ship very suitable to a lady. Do not go till I see you. I will see you as soon as I can. I am, my dearest, most sincerely yours,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Gent. Mag. v. xcv. p. 320. "TO W. S. JOHNSON[2], LL. D. STRATFORD, CONNECTICUT.

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, London, March 4, 1773.

"SIR,—Of all those whom the various accidents of life have brought within my notice, there is scarce any man whose acquaintance I have more desired to cultivate than yours I cannot indeed charge you with neglecting me, yet our mutual inclination could never gratify itself with opportunities. The current of the day

[1] Captain Collier, since Sir George, proposed at that time to sail to the Mediterranean *with his lady*.—MISS REYNOLDS. [And it would seem offered Miss Reynolds a passage; and Miss Reynolds appears to have wished that Johnson might be of the party. Sir Joshua had gone to the Mediterranean in a similar way with Captain Keppel.—ED.]

[2] The late William Samuel Johnson of Connecticut. This gentleman spent several years in England about the middle of the last century. He received the degree of doctor of civil law from the university of Oxford; and this circumstance, together with the accidental similarity of name, recommended him to the acquaintance of Dr. Samuel Johnson. Several letters passed between them, after the American Dr. Johnson had returned to his native country; of which, however, it is feared that this is the only one remaining.—*Gent. Mag.*

always bore us away from one another, and now the Atlantic is between us. Gent. Mag. v. xcv. p. 320.

"Whether you carried away an impression of me as pleasing as that which you left me of yourself, I know not; if you did you have not forgotten me, and will be glad that I do not forget you. Merely to be remembered is indeed a barren pleasure, but it is one of the pleasures which is more sensibly felt as human nature is more exalted.

"To make you wish that I should have you in my mind, I would be glad to tell you something which you do not know; but all public affairs are printed; and as you and I have no common friend, I can tell you no private history.

"The government, I think, grow stronger, but I am afraid the next general election will be a time of uncommon turbulence, violence, and outrage.

"Of literature no great product has appeared, or is expected; the attention of the people has for some years been otherwise employed.

"I was told a day or two ago of a design which must excite some curiosity. Two ships are in preparation which are under the command of Captain Constantine Phipps, to explore the northern ocean; not to seek the north-east or the north-west passage, but to sail directly north, as near the pole as they can go. They hope to find an open ocean, but I suspect it is one mass of perpetual congelation. I do not much wish well to discoveries, for I am always afraid they will end in conquest and robbery.

"I have been out of order this winter, but am grown better. Can I never hope to see you again, or must I be always content to tell you that in another hemisphere I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO DR. GOLDSMITH.

"23d April, 1773.

"SIR,—I beg that you will excuse my absence to the club; I am going this evening to Oxford.

"I have another favour to beg. It is that I may be considered as proposing Mr. Boswell for a candidate of our society, and that he may be considered as regularly nominated. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO FRANCIS FOWKE, ESQ.

"11th July, 1776. Gent. Mag. vol. lxxxvii. p. 528.

"SIR,—I received some weeks ago[1] a collection of papers, which contain the trial of my dear friend, Joseph Fowke, of whom I cannot

[1] [This circumstance enables us to state that the East Indian friend, mentioned in vol. iii. p. 384, was Mr. Joseph Fowke, and to guess that *he* (and not one of the Vansittarts, as Mr. Tyers thought) was alluded to in vol. i. p. 302. The arrival of this "collection of papers" is no doubt the curious incident mentioned in vol. iii. p. 387.—ED.] Mr. J. Fowke, who died about 1794, was born about the year 1715, and entered into

Gent. Mag. vol. lxxxvii. p. 528.

easily be induced to think otherwise than well, and who seems to have been injured by the prosecution and the sentence. His first desire is, that I should prepare his narrative for the press; his second, that if I cannot gratify him by publication, I would transmit the papers to you. To a compliance with his first request I have this objection; that I live in a reciprocation of civilities with Mr. Hastings, and therefore cannot properly diffuse a narrative, intended to bring upon him the censure of the publick. Of two adversaries, it would be rash to condemn either upon the evidence of the other; and a common friend must keep himself suspended, at least till he has heard both.

"I am therefore ready to transmit to you the papers, which have been seen only by myself; and beg to be informed how they may be conveyed to you. I see no legal objection to the publication; and of prudential reasons, Mr. Fowke and you will be allowed to be fitter judges.

"If you would have me send them, let me have proper directions: if a messenger is to call for them, give me notice by the post, that they may be ready for delivery.

"To do my dear Mr. Fowke any good would give me pleasure; I hope for some opportunity of performing the duties of friendship to him, without violating them with regard to another. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

vol. lxxxix. p. 383.

"TO RICHARD BEATNIFFE, ESQ.

"Bolt-court, Fleet-street, 14th Feb. 1782.

"SIR,—Robert Levet, with whom I have been connected by a friendship of many years, died lately at my house. His death was

the service of the East India Company at the age of 17. He remained at Fort St. George till 1748, and when he returned to England was offered the government either of Bengal or Madras. This offer was by no means so advantageous as it would be at present; Mr. Fowke therefore declined it, and remained in England until 1771. At this period he returned to India, where some differences of opinion unfortunately occurred between him and the Provisional Government, which ended in his being tried in June, 1775, in the Supreme Court of Bengal, under two indictments. In the first of these trials the verdict was, not guilty. In the second, in which Mr. Fowke was implicated with Nundocomar and Rada Churn, the verdict was, "Joseph Fowke and Nundocomar, guilty; Rada Churn, not guilty." In the year 1788 Mr. Fowke finally quitted Bengal, with a recommendation from Lord Cornwallis to the Court of Directors, as a person entitled to receive the pension which was promised to their servants returning from Bengal out of employment. This recommendation was, however, rejected. After a lapse of some time, the claim was brought forward by Mr. Burke [with the readers of whose works the case of Nundocomar must be familiar] in the House of Commons, when the following resolution was made in his favour:—

"Resolved, That it appears to this House, that the said Joseph Fowke is entitled to the pension or allowance engaged to be paid by the East Company to their servants, under certain descriptions, and under certain conditions, expressed in their letter from the Court of Directors of the 21st of September, 1785, to the Governor-General and Council of Bengal, from the time in which, by the said letter of the 21st of September, 1785, persons described in the said letter were to receive the same."—*Gent. Mag.*

sudden, and no will has yet been found; I therefore gave notice of his death in the papers, that an heir, if he has any, may appear. He has left very little; but of that little his brother is doubtless heir, and your friend may be perhaps his brother. I have had another application from one who calls himself his brother; and I suppose it is fit that the claimant should give some proofs of his relation. I would gladly know, from the gentleman that thinks himself R. Levet's brother, Gent. Mag. vol. lxxxix. p. 383.

"In what year, and in what parish, R. Levet was born?

"Where or how was he educated?

"What was his early course of life?

"What were the marks of his person; his stature; the colour of his eyes?

"Was he marked by the small-pox?

"Had he any impediment in his speech?

"What relations had he, and how many are now living?

"His answer to these questions will show whether he knew him; and he may then proceed to show that he is his brother.

"He may be sure, that nothing shall be hastily wasted or removed. I have not looked into his boxes, but transferred that business to a gentleman in the neighbourhood, of character above suspicion.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. NICHOLS.

"10th January, 1783. 1784, p. 893.

"SIR,—I am much obliged by your kind communication of your account of Hinckley [1]. I know Mr. Carte is one of the prebendaries of Lichfield, and for some time surrogate of the chancellor. Now I will put you in a way of showing me more kindness. I have been confined by illness a long time; and sickness and solitude make tedious evenings. Come sometimes and see, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

It was Sir Joshua Reynolds who introduced Mr. Crabbe's poem (see ante; vol. v. p. 56) *to Dr. Johnson's notice, and the following is the letter with which he returned it, and which was not found till it was too late to insert it in its proper place.* Reyn. MS.

"4th March, 1783.

"SIR,—I have sent you back Mr. Crabbe's poem, which I read with great delight. It is original, vigorous, and elegant.

[1] For this work Dr. Johnson had contributed several hints towards the Life of Anthony Blackwall, to whom, when very young, he had been some time an usher at Market Bosworth school. Blackwall died in April, 1730, before Johnson was one and twenty.—NICHOLS.

Reyn. MS. "The alterations which I have made I do not require him to adopt, for my lines are, perhaps, not often better than his own; but he may take mine and his own together, and perhaps between them produce something better than either.

"He is not to think his copy wantonly defaced. A wet sponge will wash all the red lines away, and leave the page clear.

"His dedication will be least liked. It were better to contract it into a short sprightly address.

"I do not doubt Mr. Crabbe's success. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

Gent. Mag. 1817, p. 528.

"TO JOSEPH FOWKE, ESQ.

"19th April, 1783.

"DEAR SIR,—To show you that neither length of time, nor distance of place, withdraws you from my memory, I have sent you a little present[1], which will be transmitted by Sir Robert Chambers.

"To your former letters I made no answer, because I had none to make. Of the death of the unfortunate man (meaning Nundocomar) I believe Europe thinks as you think; but it was past prevention; and it was not fit for me to move a question in publick which I was not qualified to discuss, as the inquiry could then do no good; and I might have been silenced by a hardy denial of facts, which, if denied, I could not prove.

"Since we parted, I have suffered much sickness of body and perturbation of mind. My mind, if I do not flatter myself, is unimpaired, except that sometimes my memory is less ready; but my body, though by nature very strong, has given way to repeated shocks.

Æn. v. 432. "*Genua labant, vastos quatit æger anhelitus artus.* This line might have been written on purpose for me. You will see, however, that I have not totally forsaken literature. I can apply better to books than I could in some more vigorous parts of my life—at least than I *did*; and I have one more reason for reading—that time has, by taking away my companions, left me less opportunity of conversation. I have led an inactive and careless life; it is time at last to be diligent: there is yet provision to be made for eternity.

"Let me know, dear sir, what you are doing. Are you accumulating gold, or picking up diamonds? Or are you now sated with Indian wealth, and content with what you have? Have you vigour for bustle, or tranquillity for inaction? Whatever you do, I do not suspect you of pillaging or oppressing; and shall rejoice to see you return with a body unbroken, and a mind uncorrupted.

"You and I had hardly any common friends, and therefore I have few anecdotes to relate to you. Mr. Levet, who brought us into acquaintance, died suddenly at my house last year, in his seventy-eighth

[1] A collection of the Doctor's Works.—NICHOLS.

year, or about that age. Mrs. Williams, the blind lady, is still with me, but much broken by a very wearisome and obstinate disease. She is, however, not likely to die; and it would delight me if you would send her some *petty* token of your remembrance: you may send me one too. Gent. Mag. 1817. p. 529

"Whether we shall ever meet again in this world, who can tell? Let us, however, wish well to each other: prayers can pass the Line and the Tropics. I am, dear sir, yours sincerely,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. NICHOLS.

"12th April, 1784.

"SIR,—I have sent you inclosed a very curious proposal from Mr. Hawkins, the son of Sir John Hawkins, who, I believe, will take care that whatever his son promises shall be performed.

"If you are inclined to publish this compilation, the editor will agree for an edition on the following terms, which I think liberal enough.

"That you shall print the book at your own charge.

"That the sale shall be wholly for your benefit till your expenses are repaid; except that at the time of publication you shall put into the hands of the editor, without price, . . . copies for his friends.

"That, when you have been repaid, the profits arising from the sale of the remaining copies shall be divided equally between you and the editor.

"That the edition shall not comprise fewer than five hundred. I am, sir, your most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. SASTRES.

"Ashbourne, 21st August, 1784. Piozzi Letters, vol. ii. p. 405.

"DEAR SIR,—I am glad that a letter has at last reached you; what became of the two former, which were directed to *Mortimer* instead of *Margaret*-street, I have no means of knowing, nor is it worth the while to inquire; they neither enclosed bills, nor contained secrets.

"My health was for some time quite at a stand, if it did not rather go backwards; but for a week past it flatters me with appearances of amendment, which I dare yet hardly credit. My breath has been certainly less obstructed for eight days; and yesterday the water seemed to be disposed to a fuller flow. But I get very little sleep; and my legs do not like to carry me.

"You were kind in paying my forfeits at the club; it cannot be expected that many should meet in the summer; however, they that continue in town should keep up appearances as well as they can. I hope to be again among you.

"I wish you had told me distinctly the mistakes in the French

Letters, vol. ii. p. 405.

words. The French is but a secondary and subordinate part of your design; exactness, however, in all parts is necessary, though complete exactness cannot be attained; and the French are so well stocked with dictionaries, that a little attention may easily keep you safe from gross faults; and as you work on, your vigilance will be quickened, and your observation regulated; you will better know your own wants, and learn better whence they may be supplied. Let me know minutely the whole state of your negotiations. Dictionaries are like watches, the worst is better than none, and the best cannot be expected to go quite true.

"The weather here is very strange summer weather; and we are here two degrees nearer the north than you. I was, I think, loath to think a fire necessary in July, till I found one in the servants' hall, and thought myself entitled to as much warmth as them.

"I wish you would make it a task to yourself to write to me twice a week; a letter is a great relief to, dear sir, your, &c."

"TO THE SAME.

"Ashbourne, 2d September, 1784.

p. 407.

"DEAR SIR,—Your critick seems to me to be an exquisite Frenchman; his remarks are nice; they would at least have escaped me. I wish you better luck with your next specimen; though if such slips as these are to condemn a dictionary, I know not when a dictionary will be made. I cannot yet think that *gourmander* is wrong; but I have here no means of verifying my opinion.

"My health, by the mercy of God, still improves; and I have hope of standing the English winter, and of seeing you, and reading Petrarch at Bolt-court; but let me not flatter myself too much. I am yet weak, but stronger than I was.

"I suppose the club is now almost forsaken; but we shall I hope meet again. We have lost poor Allen; a very worthy man, and to me a very kind and officious neighbour.

"Of the pieces ascribed by Bembo to Virgil, the *Dirce* (ascribed, I think, to Valerius Cato), the *Copa* and the *Moretum* are, together with the *Culex* and *Ceiris*, in Scaliger's *Appendix ad Virgilium*. The rest I never heard the name of before.

"I am highly pleased with your account of the gentleman and lady with whom you lodge; such characters have sufficient attractions to draw me towards them; you are lucky to light upon them in the casual commerce of life.

"Continue, dear sir, to write to me; and let me hear any thing or nothing, as the chance of the day may be. I am, sir, your, &c."

"TO THE SAME.

"Ashbourne, 16th September, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—What you have told me of your landlord and his lady at Brompton has made them such favourites, that I am not sorry to hear how you are turned out of your lodgings, because the good is greater to them than the evil is to you.

"The death of dear Mr. Allen gave me pain. When after some time of absence I visit a town, I find my friends dead; when I leave a place, I am followed with intelligence, that the friend whom I hope to meet at my return is swallowed in the grave. This is a gloomy scene; but let us learn from it to prepare for our own removal. Allen is gone; Sastres and Johnson are hasting after him; may we be both as well prepared!

"I again wish your next specimen success. *Paymistress* can hardly be said without a preface (it may be expressed by a word perhaps not in use, pay mistress).

"The club is, it seems, totally deserted; but as the forfeits go on, the house does not suffer; and all clubs, I suppose, are unattended in the summer. We shall, I hope, meet in winter, and be cheerful.

"After this week, do not write to me till you hear again from me, for I know not well where I shall be; I have grown weary of the solitude of this place, and think of removal. I am, sir, your, &c."

"TO MR. STRAHAN.

"16th October, 1784.

"DEAR SIR,—I have hitherto omitted to give you that account of myself, which the kindness with which you have treated me gives you a right to expect. Gent. Mag. 1788, p. 49.

"I went away feeble, asthmatical, and dropsical. The asthma has remitted for a time, but is now very troublesome; the weakness still continues, but the dropsy has disappeared; and has twice, in the summer, yielded to medicine. I hope to return with a body somewhat, however little, relieved, and with a mind less dejected.

"I hope your dear lady and dear little ones are all well, and all happy; I love them all. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. SASTRES.

"Lichfield, 20th October, 1784.

"SIR,—You have abundance of naughty tricks; is this your way of writing to a poor sick friend twice a week? Post comes after post, and brings no letter from Mr. Sastres. If you know any thing, write and tell it; if you know nothing, write and say that you know nothing. Letters, vol. ii. p. 410.

Letters, vol. ii. p. 410.

"What comes of the specimen? If the booksellers want a specimen, in which a keen critick can spy no faults, they must wait for another generation. Had not the Crusca faults? Did not the academicians of France commit many faults? It is enough that a dictionary is better than others of the same kind. A perfect performance of any kind is not to be expected, and certainly not a perfect dictionary.

"Mrs. Desmoulines never writes, and I know not how things go on at home; tell me, dear sir, what you can.

"If Mr. Seward be in town, tell me his direction, for I ought to write to him.

"I am very weak, and have had bad nights. I am, dear sir, your, &c."

"TO THE SAME.

"Lichfield, 1st November, 1784."

p. 412.

"DEAR SIR,—I beg you to continue the frequency of your letters; every letter is a cordial; but you must not wonder that I do not answer with exact punctuality. You may always have something to tell: you live among the various orders of mankind, and may make a letter from the exploits, sometimes of the philosopher, and sometimes of the pickpocket. You see some balloons succeed and some miscarry, and a thousand strange and a thousand foolish things. But I see nothing; I must make my letter from what I feel, and what I feel with so little delight, that I cannot love to talk of it.

"I am certainly not to come to town, but do not omit to write; for I know not when I shall come, and the loss of a letter is not much. I am, dear sir, your, &c."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. NICHOLS[1].

"27th July, 1778.

Gent. Mag. vol. lv. p. 9.

"You have now all Cowley. I have been drawn to a great length; but Cowley or [and] Waller never had any critical examination before. I am very far advanced in Dryden, who will be long too. The next great Life I purpose to be Milton's.

"It will be kind if you will gather the Lives of Denham, Butler, and Waller, and bind them in half-binding in a small volume, and let me have it to show my friends as soon as may be. I sincerely hope the press shall stand no more[2]. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"August, 1778.

"You have now the Life of Dryden, and you see it is very long.

[1] [Here follow such of the short letters and notes referred to by Mr. Boswell, *ante*, vol. iv. p. 404, *n.* 1, as he did not introduce into his text.—ED.]

[2] The first life that was begun at the press was that of Cowley, in December, 1777. The progress made in July, 1778, appears above. Butler was the life in which the doctor at that time more particularly prided himself. Milton was begun in January, 1779, and finished in six weeks.—NICHOLS.

It must, however, have an Appendix. 1. The invocation to the Georgicks, from Milbourne. (This in the small print). 2. Dryden's Remarks on Rymer; which are ready transcribed. 3. Dryden's letter, from Lambeth; which is promised me." Gent. Mag. v. lv. p. 9.

"26th November, 1778.

"Mr. Johnson will hope for Mr. Nichols's company to tea, about six this afternoon, to talk of the Index, and settle the terms.—Monday.

"I am very well contented that the Index is settled; for though the price is low, it is not penurious. Mr. M. having been for some time out of business, is in some little perplexities, from which twelve guineas will set him free. This, we hope, you will advance; and, during the continuance of the work subject to your inspection, he desires a weekly payment of sixteen shillings, the rest to remain till it is completed. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"1st March, 1779.

"Mr. Johnson purposes to make his next attempt upon Prior, at least to consider him very soon; and desires that some volumes published of his papers, in two vols. 8vo. may be procured.

"The Turtle and Sparrow can be but a fable[1]. The Conversation I never read. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"In examining this book, I find it necessary to add to the Life the preface to the 'British Enchanters;' and you may add, if you will, the notes on 'Unnatural Flights.' I am, sir, &c.—Friday."

"There is a copy of verses by Fenton on the 'First Fit of the Gout,' in Pope's Miscellanies, and I think in the last volumes of Dryden. In Pope's I am sure.

Answ. "I should have given Fenton's birth to Shelton[2] in Staffordshire, but that I am afraid there is no such place. The rest I have, except his secretaryship, of which I know not what to make. When Lord Orrery was in an office, Lewis was his secretary. Lewis lived in my time; I knew him. The gout verses were always given to Fenton, when I was young, and he was living. Lord Orrery told me that Fenton was his tutor; but never thought he was his father's secretary[3]. Pray let me see the Oxford and Cambridge [Verses],

[1] This refers to a hint given him in consequence of what is said in the Life of Prior, that of his "Tales there are only four."—NICHOLS.

[2] It is now said to be "near Newcastle." Shelton (near Newcastle-under-Line) is to be found in Staffordshire in the Index Villaris of 1700.—NICHOLS.

[3] Dr. Johnson retracted this opinion, as Fenton in his Life is styled "secretary." Fenton was secretary to Lord Orrery when he commanded a regiment in Flanders, and was dismissed in 1705, four years before Dr. Johnson was born.—NICHOLS. [There is some mistake in the statement of Dr. Johnson. The first mention of Lord *Orrery* was probably a slip of the pen for *Oxford*, whose secretary Lewis was.—ED.]

Gent. Mag. v. lv. p. 10.

&c. [1707]. If you are sure it was published by Fenton, I shall take notice of it."

"Mr. Johnson desires Mr. Nichols to send him Ruffhead's Life of Pope, Pope's works, Swift's works with Dr. Hawkesworth's Life, Lyttelton's works; and with these he hopes to have done. The first to be got is Lyttelton."

"Mr. Johnson, being now at home, desires the last leaves of the criticism on Pope's epitaphs, and he will correct them. Mr. N. is entreated to save the proof sheets of Pope, because they are promised to a lady[2], who desires to have them."

"In reading Rowe in your edition, which is very impudently called mine, I observed a little piece unnaturally and odiously obscene. I was offended, but was still more offended when I could not find it in Rowe's genuine volumes[3]. To admit it, had been wrong; to interpolate it, is surely worse. If I had known of such a piece in the whole collection, I should have been angry. What can be done?"

"24th May, 1780.

"Mr. Johnson is obliged to Mr. Nichols for his communication[4], and must have Hammond again. Mr. Johnson would be glad of Blackmore's Essays for a few days."

"16th June, 1780.

"I have been out of order, but by bleeding and physick think I am better, and can go again to work. Your note on Broome[5] will do me much good. Can you give me a few dates for A. Phillips? I wrote to Cambridge about them, but have had no answer."

"Dr. Warton tells me that Collins's first piece[6] is in the *Gent. Mag.* for August, 1739. In August there is no such thing. Amasius was at that time the poetical name of Dr. Swan, who translated Sydenham. Where to find Collins I know not. I think I must make some short addition to Thomson's sheet, but will send it to-day."

"This Life of Dr. Young was written by a friend of his son [Mr. Croft]. What is crossed with black is expunged by the author; what is crossed with red is expunged by me. If you find any thing more that can be well omitted, I shall not be sorry to see it yet shorter."

[1] See Lives of the Poets, vol. iii. p. 111.—NICHOLS.

[2] Probably to Miss Burney.—NICHOLS.

[3] The epigram on a lady at the tragedy of Cato, which has not only appeared in the works of Rowe, but has been transplanted by Pope into the "Miscellanies" he published in his own name and that of Dean Swift.—NICHOLS. [This would have been a sufficient excuse (if one were needed) for the editor's omission of two or three indelicate expressions which escaped from Mr. Boswell in the course of his work.—ED.]

[4] Lives of the Poets, vol. iii. p. 185.—NICHOLS.

[5] "Select Collection," vol. iv. p. 283.—NICHOLS.

[6] *Qu.* What was it?—NICHOLS.

"16th August, 1780. Gent. Mag. v. lv. p. 11.

"I expected to have found a Life of Lord Lyttelton prefixed to his works. Is there not one before the quarto edition? I think there is; if not, I am, with respect to him, quite aground."

"Brighthelmstone, 26th Oct. 1780.

"I think you never need send back the revises unless something important occurs. Little things, if I omit them, you will do me the favour of setting right yourself. Our post is awkward, as you will find, and I fancy you will find it best to send two sheets at once."

"16th April, 1781.

"Mr. Johnson desires Mr. Nichols to send him a set of the last Lives, and would be glad to know how the octavo edition goes forward."

"10th June, 1781.

"My desire being to complete the sets of Lives which I have formerly presented to my friends, I have occasion for a few of the first volumes; of which, by some misapprehension, I have received a great number, which I desire to exchange for the latter volumes. I wish success to the new edition. Please to deliver to Mr. Steevens a complete set of the Lives in 12mo."

"26th December, 1781.

"Mr. Johnson, being much out of order, sent in search of the book, but it is not found. He will, if he is better, look himself diligently to-morrow. He thanks Mr. Nichols for all his favours."

"28th October, 1782.

"What will the booksellers give me for this new edition? I know not what to ask. I would have twenty-four sets bound in plain calf, and figured with the number of the volumes. For the rest, they may please themselves."

IV.

UNPUBLISHED Prayers by Dr. Johnson.

"Easter day, 15th April, 1759. Pearson MSS.

"ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, look down with pity upon my sins. I am a sinner, good Lord; but let not my sins burthen me for ever. Give me thy grace to break the chain of evil custom. Enable me to shake off idleness and sloth: to will and to do what thou hast commanded, grant me chaste in thoughts, words and actions; to love and frequent thy worship, to study and understand thy word; to be diligent in my calling, that I may support myself and relieve others.

"Forgive me, O Lord, whatever my mother has suffered by my

Pearson MSS. fault, whatever I have done amiss, and whatever duty I have neglected. Let me not sink into useless dejection; but so sanctify my affliction, O Lord, that I may be converted and healed; and that, by the help of thy holy spirit, I may obtain everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . .

"And O Lord, so far as it may be lawful, I commend unto thy fatherly goodness my father, brother, wife and mother, beseeching thee to make them happy for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

"SCRUPLES.

Rose MSS. "O Lord, who wouldst that all men should be saved, and who knowest that without thy grace we can do nothing acceptable to thee, have mercy upon me. Enable me to break the chain of my sins, to reject sensuality in thought, and to overcome and suppress vain scruples; and to use such diligence in lawful employment as may enable me to support myself and do good to others. O Lord, forgive me the time lost in idleness; pardon the sins which I have committed, and grant that I may redeem the time mispent, and be reconciled to thee by true repentance, that I may live and die in peace, and be received to everlasting happiness. Take not from me, O Lord, thy holy spirit, but let me have support and comfort for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

"Transc. June 26, 1768. Of this prayer there is no date, nor can I conjecture when it was composed."

V.

ACCOUNT of Dr. Johnson's last Dinner[1] at Streatham.

"Oct. 6, Die Dominica, 1782.

Rose MSS. "Pransus sum Streathamiæ agninum crus coctum cum herbis (spinach) comminutis, farcimen farinaceum cum uvis passis, lumbos bovillos, et pullum gallinæ Turcicæ; et post carnes missas, ficus, uvas, non admodum maturas, ita voluit anni intemperies, cum malis Persicis, iis tamen duris. Non lætus accubui, cibum modicè sumpsi, ne intemperantiâ ad extremum peccaretur. Si recte memini, in mentem venerunt epulæ in exequiis Hadoni celebratæ. Streathamiam quando revisam?"

[1] [He seems to have taken leave of the *kitchen* as well as of the *church* at Streatham in Latin. See *ante*, vol. v. p. 37. The phrase "ne intemperantiâ *ad extremum* peccaretur" is remarkable, and proves that this, which at first sight looks like burlesque, was written when in sober sadness.—ED.]

VI.

" A Poetical Review
Of the Literary and Moral Character of the late
SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.
With Notes
BY JOHN COURTENAY, ESQ.

Man is thy theme; his virtue, or his rage,
Drawn to the life, in each elaborate page.—WALLER

———— *immensæ veluti connexa carinæ*
Cymba minor.—STATIUS [1].

LONDON: PRINTED FOR CHARLES DILLY, IN THE POULTRY, 1786.

The following poem was never very popular, and is now so scarce that it was not without difficulty that a copy was procured on this occasion to print from. The subject, "sermoni proprior," is not favourable to poetry; the criticism is sometimes superficial and erroneous; and the raillery frequently offends good feeling and good taste. It is, however, with all its defects, and, indeed, on account of these defects, deserving a place in this collection of Johnsoniana, *not only as a tribute to the general excellence of Dr. Johnson's character, but in order that some of the errors it contains may be corrected.* ED.

The author, once a considerable person in the political and literary world, is fading so fast from public memory, that the editor is glad to be able to present his readers with the following biographical notice of Mr. Courtenay, from the pen of their common friend, Sir James Mackintosh.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF MR. COURTENAY.

JOHN COURTENAY was so intimate a friend of Boswell, and so long a member of the club, founded by Johnson, that a short account of him may not be misplaced in this work. Mackintosh.

He was born at Carlingford, in August, 1738. The first of his family in Ireland settled there in the reign of Elizabeth, and married a sister of the Deputy Chichester, as appears from a monument at Carrickfergus. His grandfather served under King William at the

[1] [These two mottos would suit Mr. Boswell's work better than Mr. Courtenay's. The reader will observe in the latter quotation the original of Pope's celebrated and beautiful compliment to St. John.—*Essay on Man, Epist.* iv. *l.* 385.—ED.]

Mackintosh.

Boyne. His father, a younger son, obtained a situation in the revenue. He was himself educated at the school of Dundalk, where he read and relished the best writers of Greece and Rome; but he became so much infected with a passion for the army, or rather, for its show and dissipation, that he would not gratify his father by pursuing his studies at the university.

In 1756 he purchased an ensigncy, and seems to have combined the conviviality of the time with desultory reading and careless composition. In 1765, when on the eve of purchasing a company, he was disappointed by an accident: he relinquished the army in a fit of ill humour, and applied the purchase-money to buy the place of a commissary of musters, thus unfortunately renouncing all regular advancement in a profession. He married, obtained leave to sell his place, and, after paying his debts, found himself possessed of six hundred pounds.

About that time, Dr. Lucas, a man then popular at Dublin, had published a severe pamphlet against the sentence of a court-martial. Courtenay, prompted by old military feelings, employed his very idle hours in an answer, which obtained some commendation, and earned for him the patronage of Lord Townshend, then lord-lieutenant. He soon after became one of the writers of the "Bachelor," a government paper, conducted by Simcox, a clergyman, but chiefly written by Courtenay, Marlay[1], afterward a bishop, and Jephson[2], a dramatic poet of note. It was a main part of the task of these advocates of the Castle to counteract the "Baratarian Letters," an Irish imitation of Junius, which, attacking the lord-lieutenant's government, received contributions from Flood, and first published Grattan's character of Chatham. Previous to the recall of the lord-lieutenant he gave Courtenay the place of barrack-master of Kinsale, and soon after his return to England appointed him secretary to the master-general of the ordnance. Though in that confidential relation to a minister, Courtenay agreed more in opinion, and was more connected with the Opposition, as may be pretty certainly inferred from his intimacy with Mr. Windham, then an oppositionist of more than common violence, who used to meet him often at the Thatched-house, as Courtenay said, to drink a glass to the health of General Washington.

In 1780, Lord Townshend gave him a seat for Tamworth, which he long retained. He sometimes made ineffectual attempts to vindicate his consistency in voting for the minister, on the plea that he could no longer support the Americans after they had received French aid; as if those, whom he considered as exposing themselves to destruction in a righteous cause, might not lawfully seek for succour wherever they could find it. This, however, was the period of his chief success in parliament. He was then invited often to the evening

[1] [*Ante*, vol. iv. p. 443.—Ed.]

[2] [*Ante*, vol. ii. p. 89, and vol. v. p. 224.—Ed.]

convivial parties of Rigby, a man of wit and pleasure: he became an intimate friend of Mr. Gerard Hamilton, a man of considerable literature and of fastidious taste in his companions, and of Boswell, a zealous but good-natured tory. Mackintosh.

At the coalition, in 1783, he was appointed surveyor-general of the ordnance. After the expulsion of that administration, he refused to retain the office, which was handsomely offered to him by the Duke of Richmond: the letters of both do them credit. Henceforwards he attached himself to Mr. Fox, during a long and rigid exclusion from office. On one occasion he took a step not believed to be agreeable to that great man. At a dinner at Lord Lauderdale's, in Leicester-square, in spring 1792, he put his name, with others, of whom the present writer was one, to the Association of the "Friends of the People for the promotion of Parliamentary Reform," saying, as he pushed the writing materials on to his next neighbour, "There goes Tamworth." Mr. Fox, with difficulty, saved him from the necessity of leaving England in 1796 and in 1802, by procuring a seat for him.

In 1806, Mr. Fox wished to have restored him to the ordnance, but a high influence obtained that place for another, and Courtenay, after twenty-five years of opposition, had a twelvemonth's seat at the treasury.

In 1812, when aged, lonely, infirm, and nearly bed-ridden, he was rescued from cruel sufferings by the generosity of the late Lord Thanet. Even in that situation, when found at his dinner, consisting of the claw of a lobster, by one of his few visiters, he used to make his repast a subject of merriment.

The happy marriages of two daughters were, for a short time, bright spots in his little sphere; but though his life was unprosperous, it was not, thanks to his temper, unhappy. The consolations of friendship he deserved and possessed among political opponents in times of much heat. Mr. Windham and Lord Stowell, Mr. Malone, and even Mr. Burke, continued to show kindness to him. He was frequently a guest of Sir Joshua Reynolds, of whose table he gave an amusing description [which is inserted *ante*, vol. iii. p. 444].

His parliamentary speeches, by which he was best known, did injustice to his powers. He was in truth a man of fine talents, and of various accomplishments, which rendered his conversation agreeable, as his good-nature and kind heart obtained for him the attachment of many excellent friends. But, from his speeches, strangers mistook him for a jester by profession. Every Irishman has wit, but Courtenay's drollery had not that polish and urbanity, of which pleasantry stands in greater need than perhaps any other endowment.

He fell into two not easily forgotten mistakes; the one was a somewhat unrefined attack on Mr. Canning, whom he mistook for a declaiming schoolboy; the other was an attack on Mr. Wilberforce,

Mackintosh. whose meekness and gentleness he unluckily regarded, before he knew him, as proofs of want of wit. The following extract from some criticism on parliamentary speakers written by him long after, is an agreeable proof that, in the case of Mr. Wilberforce, he discovered his error, and was willing to acknowledge the justice of the chastisement. "He (Mr. W.) is quick and acute in debate, and always prompt to answer and reply. When he is provoked to personality (which seldom happens) he retorts in a poignant and refined vein of satire, peculiarly his own." In the same criticism he makes reparation to Mr. Canning, by owning that "his wit is keen," but he tries to excuse himself by adding, "that it is sometimes flippant."

He died at his humble lodging, in Duke-street, Portland-place, on the 21st of March, 1815, in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

To the early connexion of Mr. Courtenay with General Fraser, in the family of Lord Townshend, the writer of this note, (who is the general's grand-nephew) owed the beginning of a kindness which lasted till Courtenay's death. Fraser was Lord Townshend's aide-de-camp at Quebec in 1759, where by means of some French acquired when an officer in the Scotch regiments in the service of the states-general, he had the good fortune to render a more important service than is usually within the reach of an officer of the rank which he held at that time. When rowing down the river St. Lawrence, and on the point of landing, the night before the battle, they were observed by a French sentinel, who called to him for "the word," which the British officers did not know. Fraser answered in an audible whisper in French, "Hold your tongue; they will overhear us." The sentinel believed them to be a French reinforcement, and they effected their landing without disturbance. He went with Lord Townshend to Ireland, and he was killed in Burgoyne's army at Stillwater, near Saratoga, on the 7th October, 1777. His death has been affectingly represented by the pencil and the pen.

The writer attended Mr. Courtenay's funeral, almost the only duty of a friend and an executor which circumstances left for him to perform; unless he may be allowed to consider as another of these duties the present attempt to preserve a short account of Mr. Courtenay, in which he has studiously endeavoured to avoid all exaggeration, and has laboured to shun that undue expansion which he cannot help considering as a sort of tacit exaggeration.—MACKINTOSH.

A generous tear will Caledonia shed?
Her ancient foe, illustrious Johnson's dead:
Mac-Ossian's sons may now securely rest,
Safe from the bitter sneer, the cynick jest [1].

[1] "A Scotchman must be a sturdy moralist, who does not prefer Scotland to truth." *Johnson's Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland.*—COURTENAY.

Lost is the man, who scarce deigns Gray to praise,
But from the grave calls Blackmore's sleeping lays;
A passport grants to Pomfret's dismal chimes,
To Yalden's hymns, and Watts's holy rhymes [1];
By subtle doubts would Swift's fair fame invade,
And round his brows the ray of glory shade [2];

[1] "The Poems of Dr. Watts were, by my recommendation, inserted in this collection; the readers of which are to impute to me whatever pleasure or weariness they may find in the perusal of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden." *Johnson's Life of Watts.* The following specimen of their productions may be sufficient to enable the reader to judge of their respective merits:—

"Alas, Jerusalem! alas! where 's now
Thy pristine glory, thy unmatch'd renown,
To which the heathen monarchies did bow?
Ah, hapless, miserable town!"
Eleazar's Lamentation over Jerusalem, paraphrased by Pomfret.

"Before the Almighty Artist framed the sky,
Or gave the earth its harmony,
His first command was for thy light;
He view'd the lovely birth, and bless'd it:
In purple swaddling bands it struggling lay,
Old Chaos then a cheerful smile put on,
And from thy beauteous form did first presage its own."
Yalden's Hymn to Light.

"My cheerful soul now all the day
Sits waiting here and sings;
Looks through the ruins of her clay,
And practises her wings.
O, rather let this flesh decay,
The ruins wider grow;
Till, glad to see the enlarged way,
I stretch my pinions through."
A Sight of Heaven in Sickness, by Isaac Watts.—COURTENAY.

[The editor is not without some apprehensions, that *he* may incur a similar censure, for having recommended the introduction of Mr. Courtenay's poem into this collection. —ED.]

[2] He seemed to me to have an unaccountable prejudice against Swift. He said to-day, "I doubt if the 'Tale of a Tub' was his; it has so much more thinking, more knowledge, more power, more colour, than any of the works that are indisputably his. If it was his, I shall only say, he was *impar sibi.*"—*Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides*, p. 38. Dr. Johnson's "unaccountable prejudice against Swift" may probably be derived from the same source as Blackmore's, if we may venture to form a judgment from the panegyrick he bestows on the following groundless invective, expressly aimed at Swift, as the author of "A Tale of a Tub," which he quotes in his life of Blackmore: "Several, in their books, have many sarcastical and spiteful strokes at religion in general; while others make themselves pleasant with the principles of the christian. Of the last kind, this age has seen a most audacious example in the book entitled 'A Tale of a Tub.' Had this writing been published in a pagan or *popish* nation, who are *justly* impatient of all indignity offered to the established religion of their country, no doubt but the author would have received the punishment he deserved. But the fate of this impious buffoon is very different; for, in a protestant kingdom, zealous of their civil and religious immunities, he has not only escaped affronts, and the effects of publick resentment, but has been caressed and patronized by persons of great figure of all denominations." The malevolent dulness of bigotry alone could have inspired Blackmore with these sentiments. The fact is, that the "Tale of a Tub" is a continued panegyrick on the Church of England, and a bitter satire on popery, Calvinism, and every sect of dissenters. At the same time I am persuaded, that every reader of taste and discernment will perceive, in many parts of Swift's other writings, strong internal proofs of that style which characterises the "Tale of a Tub;" especially in the

With poignant taunt mild Shenstone's life arraigns,
His taste contemns, and sweetly-flowing strains;
At zealous Milton aims his tory dart,
But in his Savage finds a moral heart;
At great Nassau despiteful rancour flings [1],
But pension'd kneels ev'n to usurping kings:
Rich, old, and dying, bows his laurel'd head,
And almost deigns to ask superfluous bread [2].
A sceptick once, he taught the letter'd throng
To doubt the existence of famed Ossian's song;
Yet by the eye of faith, in reason's spite,
Saw ghosts and witches, preach'd up *second-sight:*
For o'er his soul sad superstition threw
Her gloom, and tinged his genius with her hue.
On popish ground he takes his high church station,
To sound mysterious tenets through the nation [3];

"Publick Spirit of the Whigs." It is well known, that he affected simplicity, and studiously avoided any display of learning, except where the subject made it absolutely necessary. Temporary, local, and political topicks compose too great a part of his works; but in a treatise that admitted "more thinking, more knowledge," &c. he naturally exerted all his powers. Let us hear the author himself on this point. "The greatest part of that book was finished above thirteen years since (1696), which is eight years before it was published. The author was then young, his invention at the height, and his reading fresh in his head." And again: "Men should be more cautious in losing their time, if they did but consider, that to answer a book effectually requireth more pains and skill, more wit, learning, and judgment than were employed in writing it. And the author assureth those gentlemen, who have given themselves that trouble with him, that his discourse is the product of the study, the observation and the invention of *several years;* that he often blotted out more than he left; and if his papers had not been a long time out of his possession, they must still have undergone more severe corrections." "An Apology for the Tale of a Tub."—With respect to this work being the production of Swift, see his letter to the printer, Mr. Benjamin Tooke, dated Dublin, June 29, 1710, and Tooke's answer on the publication of the "Apology" and a new edition of the "Tale of a Tub."—*Hawkesworth's edition of Swift's Works*, 8vo. vol. xvi. p. 145. Dr. Hawkesworth mentions, in his preface, that the edition of "A Tale of a Tub," printed in 1710, was revised and corrected by the Dean a short time before his understanding was impaired, and that the corrected copy was, in the year 1760, in the hands of his kinsman, Mr. Dean Swift.—COURTENAY.

[1] JOHNSON. "I would tell truth of the two Georges, or of that *scoundrel*, King William." *Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides, ante*, v. ii. p. 480.—COURTENAY.

[2] See his letter to Lord Thurlow, in which he seems to approve of the application (though he was not previously consulted), thanks his lordship for having made it, and even seems to express some degree of surprise and resentment on the proposed addition to his pension being refused.—COURTENAY. [It seems very strange, that after Sir Joshua Reynolds had received Lord Thurlow's letter of the 18th Nov. 1784, he should still have permitted Dr. Johnson and all his friends to remain in the belief, that the king *had been applied to and had refused.* See *ante*, p. 265.—ED.]

[3] "If (added Dr. Johnson) God had never spoken figuratively, we might hold that he speaks literally, when he says, 'This is my body.'" *Boswell's Tour*, p. 67. Here his only objection to transubstantiation seems to rest on the style of the scripture being figurative elsewhere as well as in this passage. Hence we may infer, that he would otherwise have believed in it. But Archbishop Tillotson and Mr. Locke reason more philosophically, by asserting, that "no doctrine, however clearly expressed in scripture, is to be admitted, if it contradict the evidence of our senses:—For our evidence for the truth of revealed religion is *less* than the evidence for the truth of our senses, because

On Scotland's kirk he vents a bigot's gall [1],
Though her young chieftains prophesy like SAUL [2]!
On Tetty's state his frighted fancy runs [3],
And Heaven's appeased by cross unbutter'd buns [4]:
He sleeps and fasts [5], pens on himself a libel [6],
And still believes, but never reads the Bible [7].
Fame says, at school, of scripture science vain,
Bel and the Dragon smote him on the brain [8];
Scared with the blow, he shunn'd the Jewish law,
And eyed the ark with reverential awe [9]:
Let priestly Strahan, in a godly fit,
The tale relate, in aid of Holy Writ;

even in the first authors of our religion, it was no greater; and it is evident it must diminish in passing from them to us, through the medium of human testimony."—COURTENAY. [Mr. Courtenay's sneer at Dr. Johnson's opinion on transubstantiation is surely unmerited. No doubt, *if* there were no other figurative expressions in the scriptures, this single text must have been understood literally by Dr. Johnson, or any other man of common sense; and as to what Mr. Courtenay adds about the evidence of our senses, and attributes to Mr. Locke and Archbishop Tillotson, these writers, and particularly Tillotson, appear to limit their assertion to doctrines, the subjects of which are properly within the evidence of our senses. Could Mr. Courtenay doubt that Tillotson believed in the *Trinity*?—Yet how stands that doctrine with the mere evidence of our senses?—ED.]

[1] See his conversation with Lord Auchinleck. *Boswell's Tour*, *ante*, vol. iii. p. 78.—COURTENAY.

[2] See the First Book of Samuel, ch. x.—COURTENAY.

[3] "And I commend to thy fatherly goodness the soul of my departed wife, beseeching thee to grant her whatever is best in her present state." *Johnson's Meditations.*—COURTENAY.

[4] "I returned home, but could not settle my mind. At last I read a chapter. Then went down about six or seven, and eat two cross-buns." *Meditations*, p. 154.—COURTENAY.

[5] "I fasted, though less rigorously than at other times. I by negligence poured some milk into my tea." *Ibid.* p. 146. "Yesterday I fasted, as I have always, or commonly done, since the death of Tetty; the fast was more painful than usual."—COURTENAY.

[6] "PURPOSES.

"To keep a journal. To begin this day (September 18th, 1766).

"To spend four hours in study every day, and as much more as I can.

"To read a portion of scripture in Greek every Sunday.

"To rise at eight.—Oct. 3d. Of all this I have done nothing." *Ibid.*—COURTENAY.

[7] "I resolved last Easter to read, within the year, the whole Bible; a great part of which I had never looked upon." *Meditations.*—COURTENAY.

[8] "I have never yet read the Apocrypha. When I was a boy I have read or heard Bel and the Dragon." *Meditations.*—COURTENAY. [It is not worth while to show that, in several of the foregoing allusions, the verse *above* is often a misrepresentation of the prose *below*, and that Mr. Courtenay plays the mere verbal critic on these expressions, while the *spirit* escapes him. If, indeed (as from Dr. Strahan's preface might be believed), Dr. Johnson had *directed the publication* of these "Meditations" as an example of his own piety, or an incentive to that of others, Mr. Courtenay might have been forgiven if he had made his satire still more poignant. It is hoped, however, that, after the explanations given (*ante*, preface, vol. i. p. 213, and vol. v. p. 295), that Dr. Johnson will hereafter receive the full credit for the piety which prompted these "Meditations," without any of the ridicule or obloquy of having prepared them for publication.—ED.]

[9] See the First Book of Samuel, ch. v. and vi., in which an account is given of the punishment of the Philistines for looking into the ark.—COURTENAY.

Though candid Adams, by whom David fell [1],
Who ancient miracles sustain'd so well,
To recent wonders may deny his aid [2],
Nor own a pious brother of the trade.
A coward wish, long stigmatized by fame,
Devotes Mæcenas to eternal shame [3];
Religious Johnson, future life to gain,
Would ev'n submit to everlasting pain:
How clear, how strong, such kindred colours paint
The Roman epicure and Christian saint!
O, had he lived in more enlighten'd times,
When signs from heaven proclaim'd vile mortals' crimes,
How had he groan'd, with sacred horrors pale,
When Noah's comet shook her angry tail [4];

[1] The Rev. Dr. Adams, of Oxford, distinguished for his answer to David Hume's "Essay on Miracles."—COURTENAY.

[2] From the following letter there is reason to apprehend that Dr. Adams would not support Mr. Strahan, if he should add this to the other singular anecdotes that he has published relative to Dr. Johnson.

"*Oxford, 22d Oct.* 1785.

"MR. URBAN,—*In your last month's review of books, you have asserted, that the publication of Dr. Johnson's 'Prayers and Meditations' appears to have been at the instance of Dr. Adams, Master of Pembroke College, Oxford. This, I think, is more than you are warranted by the editor's preface to say; and is so far from being true, that Dr. Adams never saw a line of these compositions, before they appeared in print, nor ever heard from Dr. Johnson, or the editor, that any such existed. Had he been consulted about the publication, he would certainly have given his voice against it: and he therefore hopes that you will clear him, in as public a manner as you can, from being any way accessary to it.* "WM. ADAMS."—COURTENAY.

[3] "Debilem facito manu,
Debilem pede, coxa,
Tuber adstrue gibberum;
Lubricos quate dentes,
Vita dum superest, bene est:
Hanc mihi, vel acuta
Si sedeam cruce, sustine."—*Senec. Epist.*

Let me but live, the famed Mæcenas cries,
Lame of both hands, and lame in feet and thighs;
Hump-back'd and toothless;—all convulsed with pain,
Ev'n on the cross,—so precious life remain.

Dr. Johnson, in his last illness, is said to have declared (in the presence of Doctors H. and B.) that he would prefer a state of existence in eternal pain to annihilation.—COURTENAY. [The editor finds no evidence of this, and the subsequent testimony of Drs. Heberden and Brocklesby inclines him to disbelieve it. It is not very clear here, whether Mr. Courtenay meant to *censure* Johnson for a "kindred" wish to that of Mæcenas, or to *praise* him as a "christian saint," for aspiring after even a painful immortality; but 'tis really of no importance. All these flippancies of Mr. Courtenay may be regretted on his own account, but they cannot affect the character of Dr. Johnson.—ED.]

[4] "This last comet, which appeared in the year 1680, I may well call the most remarkable one that ever appeared; since, besides the former consideration, I shall presently show, that it is no other than that very comet, which came by the earth at the time of Noah's deluge, and which was the cause of the same." *Whiston's Theory of the Earth*, p. 188.—COURTENAY.

That wicked comet, which Will Whiston swore
Would burn the earth that she had drown'd before [1]!
Or when Moll Tofts, by throes parturient vex'd,
Saw her young rabbits peep from Esdras' text [2]!
To him such signs, prepared by mystick grace,
Had shown the impending doom of Adam's race.
But who to blaze his frailties feels delight,
When the great Author rises to our sight?
When the pure tenour of his life we view,
Himself the bright exemplar that he drew?
Whose works console the good, instruct the wise,
And teach the soul to claim her kindred skies.
By grateful bards his name be ever sung,
Whose sterling touch has fix'd the English tongue!
Fortune's dire weight, the patron's cold disdain,
"Shook off, like dew-drops from the lion's mane [3];"
Unknown, unaided, in a friendless state [4],
Without one smile of favour from the great;

[1] "Since 575 years appear to be the period of the comet that caused the deluge, what a learned friend, who was the occasion of my examination of this matter, suggests, will deserve to be considered; viz. Whether the story of the phœnix, that celebrated emblem of the resurrection in christian antiquity, (that it returns once after five centuries, and goes to the altar and city of the sun, and is there burnt; and another arises out of its ashes, and carries away the remains of the former, &c.) be not an allegorical representation of this comet, which returns once after five centuries, and goes down to the sun, and is there vehemently heated, and its outward regions dissolved; yet that it flies off again, and carries away what remains after that terrible burning, &c.; and whether the *conflagration* and renovation of things, which some such comet may bring on the earth, be not hereby prefigured, I will not here be positive: but I own, that I do not know of any solution of this famous piece of mythology and hieroglyphics, as this seems to be, that can be compared with it." *Ibid.* p. 196.—COURTENAY.

[2] "'Tis here foretold (by Esdras) that there should be *signs in the woman*; and before all others this prediction has been verified in the famous *rabbit-woman of Surrey*, in the days of King George I. This story has been so unjustly laughed out of countenance, that I must distinctly give my reasons for believing it to be true, and alleging it here as the fulfilling of this ancient prophecy before us. 1st. The man-midwife, Mr. Howard, of Godalmin, Surrey, a person of very great honesty, skill and reputation in his profession, attested it. It was believed by King George to be real; and it was also believed by my old friends, the speaker and Mr. Samuel Collet, as they told me themselves, and was generally by sober persons in the neighbourhood. Nay, Mr. Molyneux, the prince's secretary, a very inquisitive person, and my very worthy friend, assured me he had at first so great a diffidence in the truth of the fact, and was so little biassed by the other believers, even by the king himself, that he would not be satisfied till he was permitted both to see and feel the rabbit, *in that very passage, whence we all come into this world.*"—*Whiston's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 110.—COURTENAY.

[3] "The incumbrances of fortune were shaken from his mind, like dew-drops from the lion's mane." *Johnson's Preface to his edition of Shakspeare.*—COURTENAY.

[4] Every reader of sensibility must be strongly affected by the following pathetic passages:—"Much of my life has been lost under the pressures of disease; much has been trifled away, and much has always been spent in provision for the day that was passing over me; but I shall not think my employment useless or ignoble, if by my

The bulky tome his curious care refines,
Till the great work in full perfection shines:
His wide research and patient skill displays
What scarce was sketch'd in Anna's golden days[1];
What only learning's aggregated toil
Slowly accomplish'd in each foreign soil[2].
Yet to the mine though the rich coin he trace,
No current marks his early essays grace;
For in each page we find a massy store
Of English bullion mix'd with Latian ore:
In solemn pomp, with pedantry combined,
He vents the morbid sadness of his mind[3];
In scientifick phrase affects to smile,
Form'd on Brown's turgid Latin-English style[4];
Where oft the abstract in stiff state presides[5],
And measured numbers, measured periods guides:
But all propriety his Ramblers mock,
When Betty prates from Newton and from Locke;

assistance foreign nations and distant ages gain access to the propagators of knowledge, and understand the teachers of truth; if my labours afford light to the repositories of science, and add celebrity to Bacon, to Hooker, to Milton, and to Boyle."—"In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed; and though no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the author, and the world is little solicitous to know whence proceeded the faults of that which it condemns, yet it may gratify curiosity to inform it, that the English Dictionary was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow." *Preface to Dr. Johnson's Dictionary.*—COURTENAY.

[1] See Swift's letter to Lord Oxford for the institution of an academy to improve and fix the English language.—COURTENAY.

[2] The great French and Italian Dictionaries were not the productions of an individual, but were compiled by a body of academicians in each country.—COURTENAY.

[3] "In times and regions so disjoined from each other, that there can scarcely be imagined any communication of sentiments, either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporal austerities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeasing his justice by a speedy and cheerful submission to a less penalty when a greater is incurred." *Rambler*, No. 110.—COURTENAY.

[4] The style of the "Ramblers" seems to have been formed on that of Sir Thomas Brown's "Vulgar Errors and Christian Morals." "But ice is water congealed by the frigidity of the air, whereby it acquireth no new form, but rather a consistence or determination of its deffluency, and amitteth not its essence, but condition of fluidity. Neither doth there any thing properly conglaciate but water, or watery humidity, for the determination of quicksilver is properly fixation, that of milk coagulation, and that of oil and unctuous bodies only incrassation."—Is this written by Brown or Johnson?—COURTENAY. [This criticism is not just, or at least not well placed. Brown is treating of *scientific* effects, and uses learned language; any other writer would probably have done the same: the real objection is that which Mr. Courtenay states afterwards—namely, that Johnson uses these learned words on inappropriate occasions.—ED.]

[5] In the "Ramblers" the abstract too often occurs instead of the concrete;—one of Dr. Johnson's peculiarities.—COURTENAY.

When no diversity we trace between
The lofty moralist and gay fifteen [1].—
Yet genius still breaks through the encumbering phrase;
His taste we censure, but the work we praise:
There learning beams with fancy's brilliant dyes,
Vivid as lights that gild the northern skies;
Man's complex heart he bares to open day,
Clear as the prism unfolds the blended ray:
The picture from his mind assumes its hue,
The shade's too dark, but the design still true.
Though Johnson's merits thus I freely scan,
And paint the foibles of this wond'rous man;
Yet can I coolly read, and not admire,
When learning, wit, and poetry conspire
To shed a radiance o'er his moral page,
And spread truth's sacred light to many an age:
For all his works with innate lustre shine,
Strength all his own, and energy divine:
While through life's maze he darts his piercing view,
His mind expansive to the object grew.
In judgment keen he acts the critic's part,
By reason proves the feelings of the heart;
In thought profound, in nature's study wise,
Shows from what source our fine sensations rise;
With truth, precision, fancy's claims defines,
And throws new splendour o'er the poet's lines [2].
When specious sophists with presumption scan,
The source of evil, hidden still from man [3];
Revive Arabian tales [4], and vainly hope
To rival St. John and his scholar, Pope [5];
Though metaphysicks spread the gloom of night,
By reason's star he guides our aching sight;

[1] See "Victoria's Letter," *Rambler*, No. 130.—"I was never permitted to sleep till I had passed through the cosmetick discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water and may-dews; my hair was perfumed with a variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to discuss dimples and clear discolorations."—COURTENAY.

[2] See his admirable "Lives of the Poets," and particularly his disquisition on metaphysical and religious poetry.—COURTENAY.

[3] See his review of Soame Jennings's [Jenyns] "Essay on the Origin of Evil;" a masterpiece of composition, both for vigour of style and precision of ideas.—COURTENAY.

[4] Pope's, or rather Bolingbroke's, system was borrowed from the Arabian metaphysicians.—COURTENAY.

[5] The scheme of the "Essay on Man" was given by Lord Bolingbroke to Pope.—COURTENAY. [Dr. Johnson doubted this, and there seems good reason to believe that Bolingbroke's contribution towards the Essay on Man has been greatly overstated.—Ed.]

The bounds of knowledge marks, and points the way
To pathless wastes, where wilder'd sages stray;
Where, like a farthing link-boy, Jenyns stands,
And the dim torch drops from his feeble hands.
Impressive truth, in splendid fiction drest [1],
Checks the vain wish, and calms the troubled breast;
O'er the dark mind a light celestial throws,
And soothes the angry passions to repose:
As oil effused illumes and smooths the deep [2],
When round the bark the swelling surges sweep.—
With various stores of erudition fraught,
The lively image, the deep-searching thought,
Slept in repose;—but when the moment press'd,
The bright ideas stood at once confess'd [3];
Instant his genius sped its vigorous rays,
And o'er the letter'd world diffused a blaze:
As womb'd with fire the cloud electrick flies,
And calmly o'er the horizon seems to rise;
Touch'd by the pointed steel, the lightning flows,
And all the expanse with rich effulgence glows.
Soft-eyed compassion with a look benign,
His fervent vows he offer'd at thy shrine;
To guilt, to woe, the sacred debt was paid [4],
And helpless females bless'd his pious aid;

[1] See that sublime and beautiful tale, "The Prince of Abyssinia," and "The Rambler," No. 65, 204, &c. &c.—COURTENAY.

[2] "The world is disposed to call this a discovery of Dr. Franklin's (from his paper inserted in the "Philosophical Transactions,") but in this they are much mistaken. Pliny, Plutarch, and other naturalists were acquainted with it.—"Ea natura est olei, ut lucem afferat, ac tranquillat omnia, etiam mare, quo non aliud elementum implacabilius." *Memoirs of the Society of Manchester.*—COURTENAY.

[3] Dr. Johnson's extraordinary facility of composition is well known from many circumstances. He wrote forty pages of the "Life of Savage" in one night. He composed seventy lines of his "Imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal," and wrote them down from memory, without altering a word. In the prologue on opening Drury-lane theatre, he changed but one word, and that in compliment to Mr. Garrick. Some of his "Ramblers" were written while the printer's messenger was waiting to carry the copy to the press. Many of the "Idlers" were written at Oxford; Dr. Johnson often began his task only just in time not to miss the post, and sent away the paper without reading it over.—COURTENAY.

[4] The dignified and affecting letter written by him to the king in the name of Dr. Dodd, after his condemnation, is justly and, I believe, universally admired. His benevolence, indeed, was uniform and unbounded. I have been assured, that he has often been so much affected by the sight of several unfortunate women, whom he has seen almost perishing in the streets, that he has taken them to his own house; had them attended with care and tenderness; and, on their recovery, clothed, and placed them in a way of life to earn their bread by honest industry.—COURTENAY. [See *ante*, vol. v. p. 219. Such a circumstance may have happened once, but it is absurd to represent it as *habitual* as Mr. Courtenay has done. Dr. Johnson's house never was without the superintendence of a respectable lady, who, of course, would not have tolerated any frequent practice of such irregular charity.—ED.]

Snatch'd from disease, and want's abandon'd crew,
Despair and anguish from their victims flew:
Hope's soothing balm into their bosoms stole,
And tears of penitence restored the soul.
But hark, he sings! the strain even Pope admires;
Indignant Virtue her own bard inspires;
Sublime as Juvenal, he pours his lays [1],
And with the Roman shares congenial praise:—
In glowing numbers now he fires the age,
And Shakspeare's sun relumes the clouded stage [2].
So full his mind with images was fraught,
The rapid strains scarce claim'd a second thought;
And with like ease his vivid lines assume
The garb and dignity of ancient Rome.—
Let college *versemen* flat conceits express,
Trick'd out in splendid shreds of Virgil's dress;
From playful Ovid cull the tinsel phrase,
And vapid notions hitch in pilfer'd lays;
Then with mosaick art the piece combine,
And boast the glitter of each dulcet line:
Johnson adventured boldly to transfuse
His vigorous sense into the Latian muse;
Aspired to shine by unreflected light,
And with a Roman's ardour *think* and write.
He felt the tuneful Nine his breast inspire,
And, like a master, waked the soothing [3] lyre:
Horatian strains a grateful heart proclaim,
While Sky's wild rocks resound his Thralia's name.—
Hesperia's plant, in some less skilful hands,
To bloom a while, factitious heat demands;
Though glowing Maro a faint warmth supplies,
The sickly blossom in the hot-house dies:
By Johnson's genial culture, art, and toil,
Its root strikes deep, and owns the fostering soil;
Imbibes our sun through all its swelling veins,
And grows a native of Britannia's plains.

[1] "London," a Satire, and "The Vanity of Human Wishes," are both imitated from Juvenal. On the publication of "London" in 1738, Mr. Pope was so much struck by it, that he desired Mr. Dodsley, his bookseller, to find out the author. Dodsley having sought him in vain for some time, Mr. Pope said he would very soon be *deterré*. Afterwards Mr. Richardson, the painter, found out Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Pope recommended him to Lord Gower.—COURTENAY.

[2] See the prologue spoken by Mr. Garrick in 1747, on the opening of Drury-lane theatre.—COURTENAY.

[3] "Inter *ignotæ* strepitus *loquelæ*." *Ode to Mrs. Thrale.*—COURTENAY. [See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 388.—ED.]

How few distinguish'd of the studious train
At the gay board their empire can maintain!
In their own books intomb'd their wisdom lies;
Too dull for talk, their slow conceptions rise:
Yet the mute author, of his writings proud,
For wit unshown claims homage from the crowd;
As thread-bare misers, by mean avarice school'd,
Expect obeisance from their hidden gold,—
In converse quick, impetuous Johnson press'd
His weighty logick, or sarcastick jest:
Strong in the chase, and nimble in the turns [1],
For victory still his fervid spirit burns;
Subtle when wrong, invincible when right,
Arm'd at all points, and glorying in his might,
Gladiator-like, he traverses the field,
And strength and skill compel the foe to yield.—
Yet have I seen him, with a milder air,
Encircled by the witty and the fair,
Even in old age with placid mien rejoice
At beauty's smile, and beauty's flattering voice.—
With Reynolds' pencil, vivid, bold, and true,
So fervent Boswell gives him to our view.
In every trait we see his mind expand;
The master rises by the pupil's hand;
We love the writer, praise his happy vein,
Graced with the naiveté of the sage Montaigne.
Hence not alone are brighter parts display'd,
But even the specks of character portray'd:
We *see* the Rambler with fastidious smile
Mark the lone tree, and note the heath-clad isle;
But when the heroick tale of Flora charms [2],
Deck'd in a kilt, he wields a chieftain's arms:
The tuneful piper sounds a martial strain,
And Samuel sings, "The king shall have his ain:"
Two Georges in his loyal zeal are slurr'd [3],
A gracious pension only saves the third!—

[1] "A good continued speech (says Bacon in his 'Essays') without a good speech of interlocution, shows slowness; and a good reply, or second speech, without a good settled speech, showeth shallowness and weakness. As we see in beasts, that those that are weakest in the course, are yet *nimblest in their turn*; as it is betwixt the greyhound and the hare." If this observation be just, Dr. Johnson is an exception to the rule; for he was certainly as *strong* "in the course, as nimble in the turn;" as ready in "reply," as in "a settled speech."—COURTENAY. [See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 127. *n.* Lord St. Helens has since informed the editor, that his father, Mr. Fitzherbert, had confirmed to him the account of Johnson's failure at the Society of Arts.—ED.]

[2] The celebrated Flora Macdonald. See Boswell's *Tour*.—COURTENAY.

[3] See note [1], p. 450.—COURTENAY.

By nature's gifts ordain'd mankind to rule,
He, like a Titian, form'd his brilliant school;
And taught congenial spirits to excel,
While from his lips impressive wisdom fell.
Our boasted Goldsmith felt the sovereign sway;
To him we owe his sweet yet nervous lay.
To fame's proud cliff he bade our Raphael rise;
Hence Reynolds' pen with Reynolds' pencil vies.
With Johnson's flame melodious Burney glows [1],
While the grand strain in smoother cadence flows.
And thou, Malone, to critic learning dear,
Correct and elegant, refined, though clear,
By studying him, first form'd that classick taste,
Which high in Shakspeare's fane thy statue placed.
Near Johnson, Steevens stands, on scenick ground,
Acute, laborious, fertile, and profound.
Ingenious Hawkesworth to this school we owe,
And scarce the pupil from the tutor know.
Here early parts [2] accomplish'd Jones sublimes,
And science blends with Asia's lofty rhymes:
Harmonious Jones! who in his splendid strains
Sings Camdeo's sports on Agra's flowery plains;
In Hindu fictions while we fondly trace
Love and the Muses, deck'd with Attick grace [3].
Amid these names can Boswell be forgot,
Scarce by North Britons now esteem'd a Scot?
Who to the sage devoted from his youth,
Imbibed from him the sacred love of truth;
The keen research, the exercise of mind,
And that best art, the art to know mankind.—
Nor was his energy confined alone
To friends around his philosophick throne;
Its influence wide improved our letter'd isle,
And lucid vigour mark'd the general style:
As Nile's proud waves, swol'n from their oozy bed,
First o'er the neighbouring meads majestick spread;

[1] Dr. Burney's "History of Musick" is equally distinguished for elegance and perspicuity of style, and for scientific knowledge.—COURTENAY.

[2] Sir William Jones produced that learned and ingenious work, "Poeseos Asiaticæ Commentarii," at a very early age.—COURTENAY.

[3] "The Hindu God, to whom the following poem is addressed, appears evidently the same with the Grecian Eros and the Roman Cupido. His favourite place of resort is a large tract of country round Agra, and principally the plains of Matra, where Krishen also and the nine Gopia, who are clearly the Apollo and Muses of the Greeks, usually spend the night with music and dance." *Preface to the Hymn to Camdeo*, translated from the Hindu language into Persian, and re-translated by Sir William Jones. There can be little doubt, considering the antiquity and early civilization of Hindostan, that both the philosophy and beautiful mythology of the Greeks were drawn from that part of Asia.—COURTENAY.

Till gathering force, they more and more expand,
And with new virtue fertilize the land.
Thus sings the Muse, to Johnson's memory just,
And scatters praise and censure o'er his dust;
For through each checker'd scene a contrast ran,
Too sad a proof, how great, how weak is man!
Though o'er his passions conscience held the rein,
He shook at dismal phantoms of the brain:
A boundless faith that noble mind debased,
By piercing wit, energic reason graced;
A generous Briton [1], yet he seem'd to hope
For James's grandson, and for James's Pope [2]:
Though proudly splenetick, yet idly vain,
Accepted flattery, and dealt disdain.—
E'en shades like these, to brilliancy allied,
May comfort fools, and curb the sage's pride.
Yet learning's sons, who o'er his foibles mourn,
To latest time shall fondly view his urn;
And wondering praise, to human frailties blind,
Talents and virtues of the brightest kind;
Revere the man, with various knowledge stored,
Who science, arts, and life's whole scheme explored;
Who firmly scorn'd, when in a lowly state,
To flatter vice, or court the vain and great [3];
Whose heart still felt a sympathetick glow,
Prompt to relieve man's variegated woe;
Who even shared his talents with his friends [4];
By noble means who aim'd at noble ends [5];

[1] When Dr. Johnson repeated to Mr. Boswell Goldsmith's beautiful eulogium on the English nation, his eyes filled with tears. See the Dissertation on the Bravery of the English common Soldiers, at the end of the "Idler."—COURTENAY.

[2] [This imputation is very unjust. Dr. Johnson never "*seemed to hope*" for the restoration of papal authority or the advance of the Roman catholic religion, though he very naturally and properly respected the latter, as one of the great classes of christianity.—ED.]

[3] It is observable, that Dr. Johnson did not prefix a dedication to any one of his various works.—COURTENAY. ["His character lifted him into so much consequence, that it occasioned several respectable writers to dedicate their works to him. This was to receive more reverence than he paid." Tyers. *Gent. Mag.* Feb. 1785, p. 86.—ED.]

[4] The papers in the "Adventurer," signed with the letter T, are commonly attributed to one of Dr. Johnson's earliest and most intimate friends, Mr. Bathurst; but there is good reason to believe that they were written by Dr. Johnson, and given by him to his friend. At that time Dr. Johnson was himself engaged in writing the "Rambler," and could ill afford to make a present of his labours. The various other pieces that he gave away have bestowed fame, and probably fortune, on several persons. To the great disgrace of some of his clerical friends, forty sermons, which he himself tells us he wrote, have not yet been *deterrés*.—COURTENAY. [See on both the points alluded to in this note *ante*, vol. i. p. 211; vol. iv. p. 531; vol. i. p. 307; and vol. iv. pp. 32 and 170.—ED.]

[5] "Who noble ends by noble means obtains."—POPE.

Whose ardent hope, intensely fix'd on high,
Saw future bliss with intellectual eye.
Still in his breast Religion held her sway,
Disclosing visions of celestial day;
And gave his soul, amidst this world of strife,
The blest reversion of eternal life:
By this dispell'd, each doubt and horror flies,
And calm at length in holy peace he dies:
The sculptured trophy, and imperial bust,
That proudly rise around his hallow'd dust,
Shall mouldering fall, by Time's slow hand decay'd,
But the bright meed of virtue ne'er shall fade.
Exulting genius stamps his sacred name,
Enroll'd for ever in the dome of fame.

No. VII.

[CHARACTER of DR. JOHNSON, by DR. HORNE, Bishop of Norwich, published in the Olla Podrida, and *referred to in vol. v. p.* 359.]

"When a friend told Johnson that he was much blamed for having unveiled the weakness of Pope, 'Sir,' said he, 'if one man undertake to write the life of another, he undertakes to exhibit his true and real character; but this can be done only by a faithful and accurate delineation of the particulars which discriminate that character.'

"The biographers of this great man seem conscientiously to have followed the rule thus laid down by him, and have very fairly communicated all they knew, whether to his advantage, or otherwise. Much concern, disquietude, and offence have been occasioned by this their conduct in the minds of many, who apprehend that the cause in which he stood forth will suffer by the infirmities of the advocate being thus exposed to the prying and malignant eye of the world.

"But did these persons then ever suppose, or did they imagine that the world ever supposed, Dr. Johnson to have been a perfect character? Alas! no: we all know how that matter stands, if we ever look into our own hearts, and duly watch the current of our own thoughts, works, words, and actions. Johnson was honest, and kept a faithful diary of these, which is before the public. Let any man do the same for a fortnight, and publish it; and if, after that, he should find himself so disposed, let him 'cast a stone.' At that

hour when the failings of all shall be made manifest, the attention of each individual will be confined to his own.

"It is not merely the name of Johnson that is to do service to any cause. It is his genius, his learning, his good sense, the strength of his reasonings, and the happiness of his illustrations. These all are precisely what they were; once good, and always good. His arguments in favour of self-denial do not lose their force because he fasted, nor those in favour of devotion because he said his prayers. Grant his failings were, if possible, still greater than these; will a man refuse to be guided by the sound opinion of a counsel, or resist the salutary prescription of a physician, because they who give them are not without their faults? A man may do so, but he will never be accounted a wise man for doing it.

"Johnson, it is said, was superstitious. But who shall exactly ascertain to us what superstition is? The Romanist is charged with it by the church of England man; the churchman by the presbyterian, the presbyterian by the independent, all by the deist, and the deist by the atheist. With some it is superstitious to pray; with others to receive the sacrament; with others to believe in God. In some minds it springs from the most amiable disposition in the world —'a pious awe, and fear to have offended;' a wish rather to do too much than too little. Such a disposition one loves, and wishes always to find in a friend; and it cannot be disagreeable in the sight of him who made us. It argues a sensibility of heart, a tenderness of conscience, and the fear of God. Let him who finds it not in himself beware, lest in flying from superstition he fall into irreligion and profaneness.

"That persons of eminent talents and attainments in literature have been often complained of as dogmatical, boisterous, and inattentive to the rules of good breeding, is well known. But let us not expect every thing from any man. There was no occasion that Johnson should teach us to dance, to make bows or turn compliments; he could teach us better things. To reject wisdom because the person of him who communicates it is uncouth, and his manners are inelegant,—what is it but to throw away a pineapple, and assign for a reason the roughness of its coat? Who quarrels with a botanist for not being an astronomer? or with a moralist for not being a mathematician? As it is said, in concerns of a much higher nature, 'Every man hath his gift—one after this manner, and another after that.' It is our business to profit by all, and to learn of each that in which each is best qualified to instruct us.

"That Johnson was generous and charitable, none can deny. But he was not always judicious in the selection of his objects: distress was a sufficient recommendation; and he did not scrutinize into the failings of the distressed. May it be always my lot to have such a

benefactor! Some are so nice in a scrutiny of this kind that they can never find any proper objects of their benevolence, and are necessitated to save their money. It should doubtless be distributed in the best manner we are able to distribute it; but what would become of us all, if he on whose bounty all depend should be extreme to mark that which is done amiss?

"It is hard to judge any man, without a due consideration of all circumstances. Here were stupendous abilities and suitable attainments; but then here were hereditary disorders of body and mind reciprocally aggravating each other—a scrofulous frame, and a melancholy temper: here was a life, the greater part of which passed in making provision for the day, under the pressure of poverty and sickness, sorrow and anguish. So far to gain the ascendant over these as to do what Johnson did, required very great strength of mind indeed. Who can say that, in a like situation, he should long have possessed or been able to exert it?

"From the mixture of power and weakness in the composition of this wonderful man, the scholar should learn humility. It was designed to correct that pride which great parts and great learning are apt to produce in their possessor. In him it had the desired effect. For though consciousness of superiority might sometimes induce him to carry it high with man (and even this was much abated in the latter part of life), his devotions have shown to the whole world how humbly he walked at all times with his God.

"His example may likewise encourage those of timid and gloomy dispositions not to despond, when they reflect that the vigour of such an intellect could not preserve its possessor from the depredations of melancholy. They will cease to be surprised and alarmed at the degree of their own sufferings: they will resolve to bear with patience and resignation the malady to which they find a Johnson subject as well as themselves: and if they want words in which to ask relief from him who alone can give it, the God of mercy and Father of all comfort, language affords no finer than those in which his prayers are conceived. Child of sorrow, whoever thou art, use them; and be thankful that the man existed by whose means thou hast them to use.

"His eminence and his fame must of course have excited envy and malice; but let envy and malice look at his infirmities and his charities, and they will quickly melt into pity and love.

"That he should not be conscious of the abilities with which Providence had blessed him was impossible. He felt his own powers; he felt what he was capable of having performed; and he saw how little, comparatively speaking, he had performed. Hence his apprehensions on the near prospect of the account to be made, viewed through the medium of constitutional and morbid melancholy, which

often excluded from his sight the bright beams of divine mercy. May those beams ever shine upon us! But let them not cause us to forget that talents have been bestowed of which an account must be rendered, and that the fate of the 'unprofitable servant' may justly beget apprehensions in the stoutest mind. The indolent man who is without such apprehensions has never yet considered the subject as he ought. For one person who fears death too much, there are a thousand who do not fear it enough, nor have thought in earnest about it. Let us only put in practice the duty of self-examination; let us inquire into the success we have experienced in our war against the passions, or even against undue indulgence of the common appetites—eating, drinking, and sleeping; we shall soon perceive how much more easy it is to form resolutions than to execute them, and shall no longer find occasion, perhaps, to wonder at the weakness of Johnson.

"On the whole, in the memoirs of him that have been published, there are so many witty sayings and so many wise ones, by which the world, if it so please, may be at once entertained and improved, that I do not regret their publication. In this, as in all other instances, we are to adopt the good and reject the evil. The little stories of his oddities and his infirmities in common life will, after a while, be overlooked and forgotten; but his writings will live for ever, still more and more studied and admired, while Britons shall continue to be characterized by a love of elegance and sublimity, of good sense and virtue. The sincerity of his repentance, the stedfastness of his faith, and the fervour of his charity, forbid us to doubt, that his sun set in clouds to rise without them: and of this let us always be mindful, that every one who is made better by his books will add a wreath to his crown."

VIII.

[Diary of Dr. JOHNSON's last illness, by J. HOOLE, Esq.—*referred to in* vol. v. p. 317.]

Europ. Mag. v. xxxvi. p. 153.

"Saturday, Nov. 20, 1784.—This evening, about eight o'clock, I paid a visit to my dear friend Dr. Johnson, whom I found very ill and in great dejection of spirits. We had a most affecting conversation on the subject of religion, in which he exhorted me, with the greatest warmth of kindness, to attend closely to every religious duty, and particularly enforced the obligation of private prayer and receiving the sacrament. He desired me to stay that night and join in prayer with him; adding, that he always went to prayer every

night with his man Francis. He conjured me to read and meditate upon the Bible, and not to throw it aside for a play or a novel. He said he had himself lived in great negligence of religion and worship for forty years; that he had neglected to read his Bible, and had often reflected what he could hereafter say when he should be asked why he had not read it. He begged me repeatedly to let his present situation have due effect upon me, and advised me, when I got home, to note down in writing what had passed between us, adding, that what a man writes in that manner dwells upon his mind. He said many things that I cannot now recollect, but all delivered with the utmost fervour of religious zeal and personal affection. Between nine and ten o'clock his servant Francis came up stairs: he then said we would all go to prayers, and, desiring me to kneel down by his bed-side, he repeated several prayers with great devotion. I then took my leave. He then pressed me to think of all he had said, and to commit it to writing. I assured him I would. He seized my hand with much warmth, and repeated, 'Promise me you will do it:' on which we parted, and I engaged to see him the next day. Europ. Mag. v xxxvi. p. 153.

"Sunday, Nov. 21.—About noon I again visited him: found him rather better and easier, his spirits more raised, and his conversation more disposed to general subjects. When I came in, he asked if I had done what he desired (meaning the noting down what passed the night before); and upon my saying that I had, he pressed my hand, and said earnestly, 'Thank you.' Our discourse then grew more cheerful. He told me, with apparent pleasure, that he heard the Empress of Russia had ordered the Rambler to be translated into the Russian language, and that a copy would be sent him. Before we parted, he put into my hands a little book, by Fleetwood, on the sacrament, which he told me he had been the means of introducing to the University of Oxford by recommending it to a young student there.

"Monday, Nov. 22.—Visited the doctor: found him seemingly better of his complaints, but extremely low and dejected. I sat by him till he fell asleep, and soon after left him, as he seemed little disposed to talk; and, on my going away, he said emphatically, 'I am very poorly indeed!'

"Tuesday, Nov. 23.—Called about eleven: the doctor not up: Mr.[1] Gardiner in the dining-room: the doctor soon came to us, and seemed more cheerful than the day before. He spoke of his design to invite a Mrs. Hall[2] to be with him, and to offer her Mrs. Williams's room. Called again about three: found him quite oppressed with company that morning, therefore left him directly.

[1] [No doubt an error of the press for *Mrs.* Gardiner.—Ed.]
[2] [See *ante*, vol. iv. p. 466.—Ed.]

Europ. Mag. v. xxxvi. p. 163.

"Wednesday, Nov. 24.—Called about seven in the evening: found him very ill and very low indeed. He said a thought had struck him that his rapid decline of health and strength might be partly owing to the town air, and spoke of getting a lodging at Islington. I sat with him till past nine, and then took my leave.

"Thursday, Nov. 25.—About three in the afternoon was told that he had desired that day to see no company. In the evening, about eight, called with Mr. Nicol[1], and, to our great surprise, we found him then setting out for Islington, to the Rev. Mr. Strahan's. He could scarce speak. We went with him down the court to the coach. He was accompanied by his servant Frank and Mr. Lowe the painter. I offered myself to go with him, but he declined it.

"Friday, Nov. 26.—Called at his house about eleven: heard he was much better, and had a better night than he had known a great while, and was expected home that day. Called again in the afternoon—not so well as he was, nor expected home that night.

"Saturday, Nov. 27.—Called again about noon: heard he was much worse: went immediately to Islington, where I found him extremely bad, and scarce able to speak, with the asthma. Sir John Hawkins, the Rev. Mr. Strahan, and Mrs. Strahan, were with him. Observing that we said little, he desired that we would not constrain ourselves, though he was not able to talk with us. Soon after he said he had something to say to Sir John Hawkins, on which we immediately went down into the parlour. Sir John soon followed us, and said he had been speaking about his will. Sir John started the idea of proposing to him to make it on the spot, that Sir John should dictate it, and that I should write it. He went up to propose it, and soon came down with the doctor's acceptance. The will was then begun; but before we proceeded far, it being necessary, on account of some alteration, to begin again, Sir John asked the doctor whether he would choose to make any introductory declaration respecting his faith. The doctor said he would. Sir John further asked if he would make any declaration of his being of the church of England: to which the doctor said '*No!*' but, taking a pen, he wrote on a paper the following words, which he delivered to Sir John, desiring him to keep it: 'I commit to the infinite mercies of Almighty God my soul, polluted with many sins; but purified, I trust, with repentance and the death of Jesus Christ.' While he was at Mr. Strahan's, Dr. Brocklesby came in, and Dr. Johnson put the question to him, whether he thought he could live six weeks? to which Dr. Brocklesby returned a very doubtful answer, and soon left us. After dinner the will was finished, and about six we came to town in Sir John Hawkins's carriage; Sir John, Dr. Johnson, Mr.

[1] Mr. George Nicol, of Pall Mall.—J. HOOLE.

Ryland (who came in after dinner), and myself. The doctor appeared much better in the way home, and talked pretty cheerfully. Sir John took leave of us at the end of Bolt-court, and Mr. Ryland and myself went to his house with the doctor, who began to grow very ill again. Mr. Ryland soon left us, and I remained with the doctor till Mr. Sastres came in. We staid with him about an hour, when we left him on his saying he had some business to do. Mr. Sastres and myself went together homewards, discoursing on the dangerous state of our friend, when it was resolved that Mr. Sastres should write to Dr. Heberden; but going to his house that night, he fortunately found him at home, and he promised to be with Dr. Johnson next morning. Europ. Mag. v. xxxvi. p. 156.

"Sunday, Nov. 28.—Went to Dr. Johnson's about two o'clock: met Mrs. Hoole coming from thence, as he was asleep: took her back with me: found Sir John Hawkins with him. The doctor's conversation tolerably cheerful. Sir John reminded him that he had expressed a desire to leave some small memorials to his friends, particularly a Polyglot Bible to Mr. Langton; and asked if they should add the codicil then. The doctor replied, 'he had forty things to add, but could not do it at that time.' Sir John then took his leave. Mr. Sastres came next into the dining-room, where I was with Mrs. Hoole. Dr. Johnson hearing that Mrs. Hoole was in the next room desired to see her. He received her with great affection, took her by the hand, and said nearly these words: 'I feel great tenderness for you: think of the situation in which you see me, profit by it, and God Almighty keep you for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.' He then asked if we would both stay and dine with him. Mrs. Hoole said she could not; but I agreed to stay. Upon my saying to the doctor that Dr. Heberden would be with him that morning, his answer was, 'God has called me, and Dr. Heberden comes too late.' Soon after this Dr. Heberden came. While he was there, we heard them, from the other room, in earnest discourse, and found that they were talking over the affair [1] of the K—g and C———n [2]. We overheard Dr. Heberden say, 'All you did was extremely proper.' After Dr. Heberden was gone, Mr. Sastres and I returned into the chamber. Dr. Johnson complained that sleep this day had powerful dominion over him, that he waked with great difficulty, and that probably he should go off in one of these paroxysms. Afterwards he said that he hoped his sleep was the effect of opium taken some days before, which might not be worked off. We dined together—the doctor, Mr. Sastres, Mrs. Davies, and myself. He eat a pretty good dinner with seeming appe-

[1] This alludes to an application made for an increase to his pension, to enable him to go to Italy.—J. HOOLE.

[2] [*Sic;* but probably an error of the press for C———r, meaning the King and Lord Chancellor: see *ante*, p. 265.—ED.]

Europ. Mag. v. xxxvi. p. 155.

tite, but appearing rather impatient, and being asked unnecessary and frivolous questions, he said he often thought of Macbeth,—'Question enrages him.' He retired immediately after dinner, and we soon went, at his desire (Mr. Sastres and myself), and sat with him till tea. He said little, but dozed at times. At six he ordered tea for us, and we went out to drink it with Mrs. Davies; but the doctor drank none. The Rev. Dr. Taylor, of Ashburne, came soon after; and Dr. Johnson desired our attendance at prayers, which were read by Dr. Taylor. Mr. Ryland came and sat some time with him: he thought him much better. Mr. Sastres and I continued with him the remainder of the evening, when he exhorted Mr. Sastres in nearly these words: 'There is no one who has shown me more attention than you have done, and it is now right you should claim some attention from me. You are a young man, and are to struggle through life: you are in a profession that I dare say you will exercise with great fidelity and innocence; but let me exhort you always to think of my situation, which must one day be yours: always remember that life is short, and that eternity never ends! I say nothing of your religion; for if you conscientiously keep to it, I have little doubt but you may be saved: if you read the controversy, I think we have the right on our side; but if you do not read it, be not persuaded, from any worldly consideration, to alter the religion in which you were educated; change not, but from conviction of reason.' He then most strongly enforced the motives of virtue and piety from the consideration of a future state of reward and punishment, and concluded with, 'Remember all this, and God bless you! Write down what I have said—I think you are the third person I have bid do this[1].' At ten o'clock he dismissed us, thanking us for a visit which he said could not have been very pleasant to us.

"Monday, Nov. 29.—Called with my son about eleven: saw the doctor, who said, 'You must not now stay;' but as we were going away, he said, 'I will get Mr. Hoole to come next Wednesday and read the Litany to me, and do you and Mrs. Hoole come with him.' He appeared very ill. Returning from the city I called again to inquire, and heard that Dr. Butter was with him. In the evening, about eight, called again and just saw him; but did not stay, as Mr. Langton was with him on business. I met Sir Joshua Reynolds going away.

"Tuesday, Nov. 30.—Called twice this morning, but did not see him: he was much the same. In the evening, between six and seven, went to his house: found there Mr. Langton, Mr. Sastres, and Mr. Ryland: the doctor being asleep in the chamber, we went all to tea and coffee, when the doctor came in to us rather cheerful, and enter-

[1] The other two were Dr. Brocklesby and myself.—J. Hoole.

ing said, 'Dear gentlemen, how do you do?' He drank coffee, and, in the course of the conversation, said that he recollected a poem of his, made some years ago on a young gentleman coming of age. He repeated the whole with great spirit: it consisted of about fifteen or sixteen stanzas of four lines, in alternate rhyme. He said he had only repeated it once since he composed it, and that he never gave but one copy. He said several excellent things that evening, and among the rest, that 'scruples made many men miserable, but few men good.' He spoke of the affectation that men had to accuse themselves of petty faults or weaknesses, in order to exalt themselves into notice for any extraordinary talents which they might possess; and instanced in Waller, which he said he would record if he lived to revise his life. Waller was accustomed to say that his memory was so bad he would sometimes forget to repeat his grace at table, or the Lord's prayer, perhaps that people might wonder at what he did else of great moment; for the doctor observed, that no man takes upon himself small blemishes without supposing that great abilities are attributed to him; and that, in short, this affectation of candour or modesty was but another kind of indirect self-praise, and had its foundation in vanity. Frank bringing him a note, as he opened it he said an odd thought struck him, that 'one should receive no letters in the grave'. His talk was in general very serious and devout, though occasionally cheerful: he said, 'You are all serious men, and I will tell you something. About two years since I feared that I had neglected God, and that then I had not a *mind* to give him; on which I set about to read Thomas à Kempis in Low Dutch, which I accomplished, and thence I judged that my mind was not impaired, Low Dutch having no affinity with any of the languages which I knew.' With respect to his recovery, he seemed to think it hopeless. There was to be a consultation of physicians next day: he wished to have his legs scarified, to let out the water; but this his medical friends opposed, and he submitted to their opinion, though he said he was not satisfied. At half past eight he dismissed us all but Mr. Langton. I first asked him if my son should attend him next day, to read the Litany, as he had desired; but he declined it on account of the expected consultation. We went away, leaving Mr. Langton and Mr. Desmoulins, a young man who was employed in copying his Latin epigrams.

Europ. Mag. v. xxxvi. p. 155.

"Wednesday, Dec. 1.—At his house in the evening: drank tea and coffee with Mr. Sastres, Mr. Desmoulins, and Mr.[2] Hall: went into the doctor's chamber after tea, when he gave me an epitaph to

[1] This note was from Mr. Davies the bookseller, and mentioned a present of some pork; upon which the doctor said, in a manner that seemed as if he thought it ill-timed, "Too much of this," or some such expression.—J. HOOLE.

[2] [Probably a mistake for *Mrs.* Hall.—ED.]

Europ. Mag. v. xxxvi. p. 156.

copy, written by him for his father, mother, and brother. He continued much the same.

"Thursday, Dec. 2.—Called in the morning and left the epitaph: with him in the evening about seven; found Mr. Langton and Mr. Desmoulins; did not see the doctor; he was in his chamber, and afterwards engaged with Dr. Scott.

"Friday, Dec. 3.—Called; but he wished not to see any body. Consultation of physicians to be held that day: called again in the evening; found Mr. Langton with him; Mr. Sastres and I went together into his chamber; he was extremely low. 'I am very bad indeed, dear gentlemen,' he said; 'very bad, very low, very cold, and I think I find my life to fail.' In about a quarter of an hour he dismissed Mr. Sastres and me; but called me back again, and said that next Sunday, if he lived, he designed to take the sacrament, and wished me, my wife, and son to be there. We left Mr. Langton with him.

"Saturday, Dec. 4.—Called on him about three: he was much the same, did not see him, he had much company that day. Called in the evening with Mr. Sastres about eight; found he was not disposed for company; Mr. Langton with him; did not see him.

"Sunday, Dec. 5.—Went to Bolt-court with Mrs. Hoole after eleven; found there Sir John Hawkins, Rev. Mr. Strahan, Mrs. Gardiner, and Mr. Desmoulins, in the dining-room. After some time the doctor came to us from the chamber, and saluted us all, thanking us all for this visit to him. He said he found himself very bad, but hoped he should go well through the duty which he was about to do. The sacrament was then administered to all present, Frank being of the number. The doctor repeatedly desired Mr. Strahan to speak louder; seeming very anxious not to lose any part of the service, in which he joined in very great fervour of devotion. The service over, he again thanked us all for attending him on the occasion: he said he had taken some opium to enable him to support the fatigue: he seemed quite spent, and lay in his chair some time in a kind of doze: he then got up and retired into his chamber. Mr. Ryland then called on him. I was with them: he said to Mr. Ryland, 'I have taken my viaticum: I hope I shall arrive safe at the end of my journey, and be accepted at last.' He spoke very despondingly several times: Mr. Ryland comforted him, observing that 'we had great hopes given us.' 'Yes,' he replied, 'we have hopes given us; but they are conditional, and I know not how far I have fulfilled those conditions[1].' He afterwards said, 'However, I think that I have

[1] See his letter to Mrs. Thrale, vol. ii. p. 350.—J. HOOLE.

now corrected all bad and vicious habits.' Sir Joshua Reynolds called on him: we left them together. Sir Joshua being gone, he called Mr. Ryland and me again to him: he continued talking very seriously, and repeated a prayer or collect with great fervour, when Mr. Ryland took his leave. He eat a tolerable dinner, but retired directly after dinner. My son came to us from his church: we were at dinner—Dr. Johnson, Mrs. Gardiner, myself, Mrs. Hoole, my son, and Mr. Desmoulins. He had looked out a sermon of Dr. Clarke's, 'On the Shortness of Life,' for me to read to him after dinner, but he was too ill to hear it. After six o'clock he called us all into his room, when he dismissed us for that night with a prayer, delivered as he sat in his great chair in the most fervent and affecting manner, his mind appearing wholly employed with the thoughts of another life. He told Mr. Ryland that he wished not to come to God with opium, but that he hoped he had been properly attentive. He said before us all, that when he recovered the last spring, he had only called it a *reprieve*, but that he did think it was for a longer time; however he hoped the time that had been prolonged to him might be the means of bringing forth fruit meet for repentance. Europ. Mag. v. xxxvi. p. 156.

"Monday, Dec. 6.[1]—Sent in the morning to make inquiry after him: he was much the same: called in the evening; found Mr. Cruikshanks the surgeon with him: he said he had been that day quarrelling with all his physicians: he appeared in tolerable spirits.

"Tuesday, Dec. 7.—Called at dinner-time: saw him eat a very good dinner: he seemed rather better, and in spirits.

"Wednesday, Dec. 8.—Went with Mrs. Hoole and my son, by appointment; found him very poorly and low, after a very bad night. Mr. Nichols the printer was there. My son read the Litany, the doctor several times urging him to speak louder. After prayers Mr. Langton came in: much serious discourse: he warned us all to profit by his situation; and, applying to me, who stood next him, exhorted me to lead a better life than he had done. 'A better life than you, my dear sir!' I repeated. He replied warmly, 'Don't compliment now.' He told Mr. Langton that he had the night before enforced on ——[1], a powerful argument to a powerful objection against Christianity.

"He had often thought it might seem strange that the Jews, who refused belief to the doctrine supported by the miracles of our Saviour, should after his death raise a numerous church; but he said that they expected fully a temporal prince, and, with this idea the multitude was actuated when they strewed his way with palm-branches on his entry into Jerusalem; but finding their expectations afterwards disappointed, rejected him, till in process of time, comparing all the circumstances and prophecies of the Old Testament,

[1] [Probably Mr. Windham; see his Journal. The word *He* in the next sentence means not Mr. Windham, but Dr. Johnson.—Ed.]

Europ. Mag. v. xxxvi. p. 157.

confirmed in the New, many were converted; that the Apostles themselves once believed him to be a temporal prince. He said that he had always been struck with the resemblance of the Jewish passover and the Christian doctrine of redemption. He thanked us all for our attendance, and we left him with Mr. Langton.

"Thursday, Dec. 9.—Called in the evening; did not see him, as he was engaged.

"Friday, Dec. 10.—Called about eleven in the morning; saw Mr. La Trobe[1] there: neither of us saw the doctor, as we understood he wished not to be visited that day. In the evening I sent him a letter, recommending Dr. Dalloway (an irregular physician) as an extraordinary person for curing the dropsy. He returned me a verbal answer that he was obliged to me, but that it was too late. My son read prayers with him this day.

"Saturday, Dec. 11.—Went to Bolt-court about twelve; met there Dr. Burney, Dr. Taylor, Sir John Hawkins, Mr. Sastres, Mr. Paradise, Count Zenobia, and Mr. Langton. Mrs. Hoole called for me there: we both went to him: he received us very kindly; told me he had my letter, but 'it was too late for doctors, *regular* or *irregular*.' His physicians had been with him that day, but prescribed nothing. Mr. Cruikshanks came: the doctor was rather cheerful with him; he said, 'Come, give me your hand,' and shook him by the hand, adding, 'You shall make no other use of it now;' meaning he should not examine his legs. Mr. Cruikshanks wished to do it, but the doctor would not let him. Mr. Cruikshanks said he would call in the evening.

"Sunday, Dec. 12.—Was not at Bolt-court in the forenoon; at St. Sepulchre's school in the evening with Mrs. Hoole, where we saw Mrs. Gardiner and Lady Rothes; heard that Dr. Johnson was very bad, and had been something delirious. Went to Bolt-court about nine, and found there Mr. Windham and the Rev. Mr. Strahan. The doctor was then very bad in bed, which I think he had only taken to that day: he had now refused to take any more medicine or food. Mr. Cruikshanks came about eleven: he endeavoured to persuade him to take some nourishment, but in vain. Mr. Windham then went again to him, and, by the advice of Mr. Cruikshanks, put it upon this footing—that by persisting to refuse all sustenance he might probably defeat his own purpose *to preserve his mind clear*, as his weakness might bring on paralytic complaints that might affect his mental powers. The doctor, Mr. Windham said, heard him patiently; but when he had heard all, he desired to be troubled no more. He then took a most affectionate leave of Mr. Windham, who reported to us the issue of the conversation, for only Mr. Desmoulins was with them in the chamber. I did not see the doctor that day,

[1] [See *ante*, p. 322, note.—Ed.]

being fearful of disturbing him, and never conversed with him again. I came away about half past eleven with Mr. Windham. Europ. Mag. v. xxxvi. p. 158.

"Monday, Dec. 13.—Went to Bolt-court at eleven o'clock in the morning; met a young lady coming down stairs from the doctor, whom, upon inquiry, I found to be Miss Morris (a sister to Miss Morris[1], formerly on the stage). Mrs. Desmoulins told me that she had seen the doctor; that by her desire he had been told she came to ask his blessing, and that he said, 'God bless you!' I then went up into his chamber, and found him lying very composed in a kind of doze: he spoke to nobody. Sir John Hawkins, Mr. Langton, Mrs. Gardiner, Rev. Mr. Strahan and Mrs. Strahan, Doctors Brocklesby and Butter, Mr. Steevens, and Mr. Nichols the printer, came; but no one chose to disturb him by speaking to him, and he seemed to take no notice of any person. While Mrs. Gardiner and I were there, before the rest came, he took a little warm milk in a cup, when he said something upon its not being properly given into his hand: he breathed very regular, though short, and appeared to be mostly in a calm sleep or dozing. I left him in this state, and never more saw him alive. In the evening I supped with Mrs. Hoole and my son at Mr. Braithwaite's, and at night my servant brought me word that my dearest friend died that evening about seven o'clock; and next morning I went to the house, where I met Mr. Seward: we went together into the chamber, and there saw the most awful sight of Dr. Johnson laid out in his bed, without life!

"JOHN HOOLE."

IX.

[SOME account of FRANCIS STUART,—*referred to in* vol. i. p. 161; vol. iv. p. 295. 302; and vol. v. p. 154. 159.

In that amusing scrap-book called "Grose's Olio," there is an imputation against Dr. Johnson of having obtained an advance of money from the publishers of the Dictionary, by the trick of substituting old sheets instead of new copy, which he had neglected to prepare. The following extract from the Gentleman's Magazine *contradicts this imputation; but for* that *sole purpose the editor would not have thought it necessary to quote it, but he is induced to do so because it also affords some curious particulars as to the practical compilation of the Dictionary, and gives some account of Francis Stuart, whose connexion with Johnson seems to the editor to have* ED.

[1] As there have been several Miss Morris's on the stage, it may be proper to mention that the young lady was sister to Miss Morris, who appeared in Juliet at Covent Garden, Nov. 26, 1768, and died May 1, 1769. She was related to Corbyn Morris, Esq. commissioner of the customs.—J. HOOLE.

been more important than Mr. Boswell supposed. Indeed Mr. Boswell's account of the little negotiation in which Dr. Johnson employed him with Stuart's sister is very confused. In December, 1779, *he states that he had, as desired by Johnson,* "discovered the sister of Stuart, and given her a guinea for an old pocket-book of her brother's which Dr. Johnson had retained; that the woman wondered at his scrupulous honesty, and received the guinea as if sent by Providence:" *ante,* vol. iv. p. 295. *But this must have been a total mistake on the part of Boswell; for it appears that the sister* had *the pocket-book or letter-case, and that it was for obtaining it that Johnson offered the guinea. This matter was probably explained in some letters not now extant; for in April,* 1780 (vol. iv. p. 302), *Johnson expresses* "satisfaction at the success of Boswell's transaction with Mrs. Stuart," *by which it may be inferred that Boswell had obtained the letter-case from her; but the negotiation was not terminated; for four years after, in* 1784 (vol. v. p. 154), *Johnson writes to Boswell,* "I desire you to see Mrs. Stewart once again, and say that in the letter-case was *a letter relating to me,* for which I will give her, if she is willing to give it to me, another guinea: the letter *is of consequence* only to me:"—*and again, 18th March,* 1784, "If you come hither through Edinburgh, send for Mrs. Stewart, and give another guinea for *the letter in the old case,* to which I shall not be satisfied with my claim till she gives it me." (Vol. v. p. 159.) *The reader now sees that the retention by Johnson of Stewart's old pocket-book, and the scrupulous honesty of paying a guinea for it, was a misapprehension; and that Johnson really wanted to obtain the pocket-book, which he did get, for the* sake of a letter *it contained which he seems not to have gotten; but what letter could this be* of consequence *to Dr. Johnson, when on the verge of the grave, yet so long neglected by him; for Stewart had been dead many years? Mr. Boswell's original error and his subsequent silence on the subject is very strange. The editor is satisfied either that Mr. Boswell did not obtain the letter, or that it related to some circumstance of Johnson's life which he did not choose to divulge; and what could it have been that* he *would not have told?*—ED.]

Gent. Mag. vol. lxix. p. 1171.

"This Steward was Francis Stuart. He was the son of a shopkeeper in Edinburgh, and was brought up to the law. For several years he was employed as a writer in some of the principal offices of Edinburgh; and being a man of good natural parts, and given to literature, he frequently assisted in digesting and arranging MSS. for the press; and, among other employments of this sort, he used to boast of assisting or copying some of the juvenile productions of the afterwards celebrated Lord Kaimes when he was very young and a correspondent with the Edinburgh Magazine. When he came to London, he stuck more closely to the press; and in this walk of copying or arranging for the press, he got recommended to Dr. Johnson, who then lived in Gough-square. Frank was a great admirer of the

doctor, and upon all occasions consulted him; and the doctor had also a very respectable opinion of his amanuensis Frank Stuart, as he always familiarly called him. But it was not only in collecting authorities that Frank was employed: he was the man who did every thing in the writing way for him, and managed all his affairs between the doctor, his bookseller, and his creditors, who were then often very troublesome, and every species of business the doctor had to do out of doors; and for this he was much better qualified than the doctor himself, as he had been more accustomed to common business, and more conversant in the ways of men. Gent. Mag. vol. lxix. p. 1171.

"That he was a porter-drinking man, as Captain Grose says, may be admitted; for he usually spent his evenings at the Bible, in Shire-lane, a house of call for bookbinders and printers, where Frank was in good esteem among some creditable neighbours that frequented the back-room; for, except his fuddling, he was a very worthy character. But his drinking and conviviality, he used to say, he left behind him at Edinburgh, where he had connected himself with some jovial wits and great card-players, which made his journey to London very prudent and necessary, as nothing but such a measure could break off the connexion, or bring them to good hours and moderation. In one of those night rambles, Stuart and his companions met with the mob-procession when they were conducting Captain Porteous to be hanged; and Stuart and his companions were next day examined about it before the town-council, when (as Stuart used to say) 'we were found to be too drunk to have had any hand in the business.' But he gave a most accurate and particular account of that memorable transaction in the Edinburgh Magazine of that time, which he was rather fond of relating.

"In another walk, besides collecting authorities, he was remarkably useful to Dr. Johnson; that was, in the explanation of low cant phrases, which the doctor used to get Frank to give his explanation of first; and all words relating to gambling and card-playing, such as *All Fours, Catch-honours, Cribbage*, &c. were, among the typos, said to be Frank Stuart's, corrected by the doctor, for which he received a second payment. At the time this happened, the Dictionary was going on printing very briskly in three departments, letter D, G, and L, being at work upon at the same time; and as the doctor was, in the printing-house phrase, *out of town*—that is, had received more money than he had produced MS. for—the proprietors restricted him in his payments, and would answer no more demands from him than at the rate of a guinea for every sheet of MS. copy he delivered; which was paid him by Mr. Strahan on delivery; and the doctor readily agreed to this. The copy was written upon 4to. post, and in two columns each page. The doctor wrote, in his own hand, the words and their explanation, and generally two or three words in

Gent. Mag. vol. lxix. p. 1172.

each column, leaving a space between each for the authorities, which were pasted on as they were collected by the different clerks or amanuenses employed: and in this mode the MS. was so regular, that the sheets of MS. which made a sheet of print could be very exactly ascertained. Every guinea parcel came after this agreement regularly tied up, and was put upon a shelf in the corrector's room till wanted. The MS. being then in great forwardness, the doctor supplied copy faster than the printers called for it; and in one of the heaps of copy it happened that, upon giving it out to the compositors, some sheets of the old MS. that had been printed off were found among the new MS. paid for. It is more probable that this happened by the doctor's keeping the old copy, which was always returned him with the proof, in a disorderly manner. But another mode of accounting for this was at that time very current in the printing-house. The doctor, besides his old and constant assistant, Stuart, had several others, some of them not of the best characters; and one of this class had been lately discharged, whom the doctor had been very kind to, notwithstanding all his loose and idle tricks; and it was generally supposed that he had fallen upon this expedient of picking up the old MS. to raise a few guineas, finding the money so readily paid on the MS. as he delivered it. But every body was inclined to acquit the doctor, as he had been well known to have rather *too little thoughts about money matters.* And what served to complete the doctor's acquittal was, Stuart immediately on the discovery supplying the *quantum* of right copy (for it was ready); which set every thing to rights, and that in the course of an hour or two, as the writer of this note can truly assert, as he was employed in the business.

"How such an erroneous and injurious account of an accident so fairly and justly to be accounted for, and the doctor's character cleared from all imputation of art or guilt, came to Captain Grose's ears, is hard to be accounted for: but it appears to have been picked up among the common gossip of the press-room, or other remote parts of the printing-house, where the right state of the fact could not be minutely related nor accurately known."

X.

LESSON IN BIOGRAPHY;

Or, How to write the Life of one's Friend.

An Extract from the Life of Dr. Pozz, *in ten volumes folio, written by* James Bozz, *Esq. who* flourished *with him near fifty years.*

[By A. Chalmers, Esq.

Referred to in vol. v. p. 365.

Among the numerous parodies and jeux d'esprit *which Mr. Boswell's work produced, the following pleasantry from the pen of Mr. Alexander Chalmers, which appeared in the periodical publications of the day, is worth preserving; for it is not merely a good pleasantry, but a fair criticism of some of the lighter parts of the work.*—Ed. Ed.]

"We dined at the chop-house. Dr. Pozz was this day very instructive. We talked of books. I mentioned the *History of Tommy Trip*. I said it was a great work. Pozz. 'Yes, sir, it is a great work; but, sir, it is a great work relatively; it was a great work to you when you was a little boy: but now, sir, you are a great man, and Tommy Trip is a little boy.' I felt somewhat hurt at this comparison, and I believe he perceived it; for, as he was squeezing a lemon, he said, 'Never be affronted at a comparison. I have been compared to many things, but I never was affronted. No, sir, if they would call *me* a dog, and *you* a canister tied to my tail, I would not be affronted.'

"Cheered by this kind mention of me, though in such a situation, I asked him what he thought of a friend of ours, who was always making comparisons. Pozz. 'Sir, that fellow has a simile for every thing but himself. I knew him when he kept a shop: he then made money, sir, and now he makes comparisons. Sir, he would say that you and I were two figs stuck together; two figs in adhesion, sir; and then he would laugh.' Bozz. 'But have not some great writers determined that *comparisons* are now and then *odious*?' Pozz. 'No, sir, not odious in themselves, not odious as comparisons; the fellows who make them are odious. The whigs make comparisons.'

"We supped that evening at his house. I showed him some lines I had made upon a pair of breeches. Pozz. 'Sir, the lines are good; but where could you find such a subject in your country?' Bozz. 'Therefore it is a proof of invention, which is a characteristic of poetry.' Pozz. 'Yes, sir, but an invention which few of your countrymen can enjoy.' I reflected afterwards on the depth of this

remark: it affords a proof of that acuteness which he displayed in every branch of literature. I asked him if he approved of green spectacles? Pozz. 'As to green spectacles, sir, the question seems to be this: if I wore green spectacles, it would be because they assisted vision, or because I liked them. Now, sir, if a man tells me he does not like green spectacles, and that they hurt his eyes, I would not compel him to wear them. No, sir, I would dissuade him.' A few months after, I consulted him again on this subject, and he honoured me with a letter, in which he gives the same opinion. It will be found in its proper place, vol. vi. p. 2789. I have thought much on this subject, and must confess that in such matters a man ought to be a free moral agent.

"Next day I left town, and was absent for six weeks, three days, and seven hours, as I find by a memorandum in my journal. In this time I had only one letter from him, which is as follows:—

"'TO JAMES BOZZ, ESQ.

"'DEAR SIR,—My bowels have been very bad. Pray buy me some Turkey rhubarb, and bring with you a copy of your *Tour*.

"'Write to me soon, and write to me often. I am, dear sir, yours, affectionately,

"'SAM. POZZ.'

"It would have been unpardonable to have omitted a letter like this, in which we see so much of his great and illuminated mind. On my return to town, we met again at the chop-house. We had much conversation to-day: his wit flashed like lightning; indeed, there is not one hour of my present life in which I do not profit by some of his valuable communications.

"We talked of *wind*. I said I knew many persons much distressed with that complaint. Pozz. 'Yes, sir, when confined, when pent up.' I said I did not know that, but I questioned if the Romans ever knew it. Pozz. 'Yes, sir, the Romans knew it.' Bozz. 'Livy does not mention it.' Pozz. 'No, sir, Livy wrote History. Livy was not writing the Life of a Friend.'

"On medical subjects his knowledge was immense. He told me of a friend of ours who had just been attacked by a most dreadful complaint: he had entirely lost the use of his limbs, so that he could neither stand nor walk, unless supported; his speech was quite gone; his eyes were much swollen, and every vein distended, yet his face was rather pale, and his extremities cold; his pulse beat 160 in a minute. I said, with tenderness, that I would go and see him; and, said I, 'Sir, I will take Dr. Bolus with me.' Pozz. 'No, sir, don't go.' I was startled, for I knew his compassionate heart, and earnestly asked why? Pozz. 'Sir, you don't know his disorder.' Bozz. 'Pray what is it?' Pozz. 'Sir, the man is—*dead drunk!*' This explanation threw me into a violent fit of laughter, in which he joined

me, rolling about as he used to do when he enjoyed a joke; but he afterwards checked me. Pozz. 'Sir, you ought not to laugh at what I said. Sir, he who laughs at what another man says, will soon learn to laugh at that other man. Sir, you should laugh only at your own jokes; you should laugh seldom.'

"We talked of a friend of ours who was a very violent politician. I said I did not like his company. Pozz. 'No, sir, he is not healthy; he is sore, sir; his mind is ulcerated; he has a political whitlow; sir, you cannot touch him without giving him pain. Sir, I would not talk politicks with that man; I would talk of cabbage and pease: sir, I would ask him how he got his corn in, and whether his wife was with child; but I would not talk politicks.' Bozz. 'But perhaps, sir, he would talk of nothing else.' Pozz. 'Then, sir, it is plain what he would do.' On my very earnestly inquiring what that was, Dr. Pozz answered, 'Sir, he would let it alone.'

"I mentioned a tradesman who had lately set up his coach. Pozz. 'He is right, sir; a man who would go on swimmingly cannot get too soon off his legs. That man keeps his coach. Now, sir, a coach is better than a chaise, sir—it is better than a chariot.' Bozz. 'Why, sir?' Pozz. 'Sir, it will hold more.' I begged he would repeat this, that I might remember it, and he complied with great good-humour. 'Dr. Pozz,' said I, '*you* ought to keep a coach.' Pozz. 'Yes, sir, I ought.' Bozz. 'But you do not, and that has often surprised me.' Pozz. 'Surprised you! There, sir, is another prejudice of absurdity. Sir, you ought to be surprised at nothing. A man that has lived half your days ought to be above all surprise. Sir, it is a rule with me never to be surprised. It is mere ignorance, you cannot guess why I do not keep a coach, and you are surprised. Now, sir, if you did know, you would not be surprised.' I said, tenderly, 'I hope, my dear sir, you will let me know before I leave town.' Pozz. 'Yes, sir, you shall know now. You shall not go to Mr. Wilkins, and to Mr. Jenkins, and to Mr. Stubbs, and say, why does not Pozz keep a coach? I will tell you myself—Sir, I can't afford it.'

"We talked of drinking. I asked him whether, in the course of his long and valuable life, he had not known some men who drank more than they could bear? Pozz. 'Yes, sir; and then, sir, nobody could bear them. A man who is drunk, sir, is a very foolish fellow.' Bozz. 'But, sir, as the poet says, "he is devoid of all care."' Pozz. 'Yes, sir, he cares for nobody; he has none of the cares of life: he cannot be a merchant, sir, for he cannot write his name; he cannot be a politician, sir, for he cannot talk; he cannot be an artist, sir, for he cannot see; and yet, sir, there is science in drinking.' Bozz. 'I suppose you mean that a man ought to know what he drinks.' Pozz. 'No, sir, to know what one drinks is nothing; but the science consists of three parts. Now, sir, were I to drink wine, I should wish

to know them all; I should wish to know when I had too little, when I had enough, and when I had too much. There is our friend ******* (mentioning a gentleman of our acquaintance); he knows when he has too little, and when he has too much, but he knows not when he has enough. Now, sir, that is the science of drinking, to know when one has enough.'

"We talked this day on a variety of topics, but I find very few memorandums in my journal. On small beer, he said it was flatulent liquor. He disapproved of those who deny the utility of absolute power, and seemed to be offended with a friend of ours who would always have his eggs poached. Sign-posts, he observed, had degenerated within his memory; and he particularly found fault with the moral of the Beggar's Opera. I endeavoured to defend a work which had afforded me so much pleasure, but could not master that strength of mind with which he argued; and it was with great satisfaction that he communicated to me afterwards a method of curing corns by applying a piece of oiled silk. In the early history of the world, he preferred Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology; but as they gave employment to useful artisans, he did not dislike the large buckles then coming into use.

"Next day we dined at the Mitre. I mentioned spirits. Pozz. 'Sir, there is as much evidence for the existence of spirits as against it. You may not believe it, but you cannot deny it.' I told him that my great grandmother once saw a spirit. He asked me to relate it, which I did very minutely, while he listened with profound attention. When I mentioned that the spirit once appeared in the shape of a shoulder of mutton, and another time in that of a tea-pot, he interrupted me:—Pozz. 'There, sir, is the point; the evidence is good, but the scheme is defective in consistency. We cannot deny that the spirit appeared in these shapes; but then we cannot reconcile them. What has a tea-pot to do with a shoulder of mutton? Neither is it a terrific object. There is nothing contemporaneous. Sir, these are objects which are not seen at the same time, nor in the same place.' Bozz. 'I think, sir, that old women in general are used to see ghosts.' Pozz. 'Yes, sir, and their conversation is full of the subject: I would have an old woman to record such conversations; their loquacity tends to minuteness.'

"We talked of a person who had a very bad character. Pozz. 'Sir, he is a scoundrel.' Bozz. 'I hate a scoundrel.' Pozz. 'There you are wrong: don't hate scoundrels. Scoundrels, sir, are useful. There are many things we cannot do without scoundrels. I would not choose to keep company with scoundrels, but something may be got from them.' Bozz. 'Are not scoundrels generally fools?' Pozz. 'No, sir, they are not. A scoundrel must be a clever fellow; he must know many things of which a fool is ignorant. Any man may

be a fool. I think a good book might be made out of scoundrels. I would have a *Biographia Flagitiosa*, the *Lives of Eminent Scoundrels*, from the earliest accounts to the present day.' I mentioned hanging: I thought it a very awkward situation. Pozz. 'No, sir, hanging is not an awkward situation: it is proper, sir, that a man whose actions tend towards flagitious obliquity should appear perpendicular at last.' I told him that I had lately been in company with some gentlemen, every one of whom could recollect some friend or other who had been hanged. Pozz. 'Yes, sir, that is the easiest way. We know those who have been hanged; we can recollect that: but we cannot number those who deserve it; it would not be decorous, sir, in a mixed company. No, sir, that is one of the few things which we are compelled to *think*.'"

Our regard for literary property[1] *prevents our making a larger extract from the above important work. We have, however, we hope, given such passages as will tend to impress our readers with a high idea of this vast undertaking.*—Note by the author.

No. XI.

MR. BOSWELL'S

Original Dedication of the "Tour to the Hebrides."

TO EDMOND MALONE, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,—In every narrative, whether historical or biographical, authenticity is of the utmost consequence. Of this I have ever been so firmly persuaded, that I inscribed a former work to that person who was the best judge of its truth. I need not tell you I mean General Paoli; who, after his great, though unsuccessful efforts to preserve the liberties of his country, has found an honourable asylum in Britain, where he has now lived many years the object of royal regard and private respect; and whom I cannot name without expressing my very grateful sense of the uniform kindness which he has been pleased to show me.

The friends of Dr. Johnson can best judge, from internal evidence, whether the numerous conversations which form the most valuable part of the ensuing pages are correctly related. To them, therefore,

[1] [This alludes to the jealousy about copyright, which Mr. Boswell carried so far that he actually printed separately, and entered at Stationers' Hall, Johnson's Letter to Lord Chesterfield (vol. i. p. 249) and the Account of Johnson's Conversation with George III. at Buckingham House, (vol. ii. p. 34) to prevent his rivals making use of them.—ED.]

I wish to appeal, for the accuracy of the portrait here exhibited to the world.

As one of those who were intimately acquainted with him, you have a title to this address. You have obligingly taken the trouble to peruse the original manuscript of this "Tour," and can vouch for the strict fidelity of the present publication. Your literary alliance with our much lamented friend, in consequence of having undertaken to render one of his labours more complete, by your edition of Shakspeare, a work which I am confident will not disappoint the expectations of the publick, gives you another claim. But I have a still more powerful inducement to prefix your name to this volume, as it gives me an opportunity of letting the world know that I enjoy the honour and happiness of your friendship; and of thus publickly testifying the sincere regard with which I am, my dear sir, your very faithful and obedient servant, JAMES BOSWELL.

London, 20th September, 1785.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

BY correcting the errours of the press in the former edition, and some inaccuracies for which the authour alone is answerable, and by supplying some additional notes, I have endeavoured to render this work more deserving of the very high honour which the publick has been pleased to show it—the whole of the first impression having been sold in a few weeks. J. B.

London, 20th December, 1785.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE THIRD EDITION.

ANIMATED by the very favourable reception which two large impressions of this work have had, it has been my study to make it as perfect as I could in this edition, by correcting some inaccuracies which I discovered myself, and some which the kindness of friends or the scrutiny of adversaries pointed out. A few notes are added, of which the principal object is, to refute misrepresentation and calumny.

To the animadversions in the periodical journals of criticism, and in the numerous publications to which my book has given rise, I have made no answer. Every work must stand or fall by its own merit. I cannot, however, omit this opportunity of returning thanks to a gentleman who published a "Defence" of my "Journal," and has added

to the favour by communicating his name to me in a very obliging letter.

It would be an idle waste of time to take any particular notice of the futile remarks, to many of which, a petty national resentment, unworthy of my countrymen, has probably given rise; remarks, which have been industriously circulated in the publick prints by shallow or envious cavillers, who have endeavoured to persuade the world that Dr. Johnson's character has been *lessened* by recording such various instances of his lively wit and acute judgment, on every topick that was presented to his mind. In the opinion of every person of taste and knowledge that I have conversed with, it has been greatly *heightened;* and I will venture to predict, that this specimen of the colloquial talents and extemporaneous effusions of my illustrious fellow-traveller will become still more valuable, when, by the lapse of time, he shall have become an *ancient;* when all those who can now bear testimony to the transcendent powers of his mind shall have passed away, and no other memorial of this great and good man shall remain but the following "Journal," the other anecdotes and letters preserved by his friends, and those incomparable works which have for many years been in the highest estimation, and will be read and admired as long as the English language shall be spoken or understood. J. B.

London, 15th August, 1786.

No. XII.

A CHRONOLOGICAL CATALOGUE

OF THE

PROSE WORKS[1] OF SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

N. B.—To those which he himself acknowledged is added *acknowl.* To those which may be fully believed to be his from internal evidence is added *intern. evid.*

1735. ABRIDGMENT and translation of Lobo's Voyage to Abyssinia, *acknowl.*

[1] I do not here include his poetical works; for, excepting his Latin translation of Pope's Messiah, his London, and his Vanity of Human Wishes, imitated from Juvenal; his Prologue on the opening of Drury-lane Theatre by Mr. Garrick, and his Irene, a Tragedy, they are very numerous, and in general short; and I have promised a complete edition of them, in which I shall, with the utmost care, ascertain their authenticity, and illustrate them with notes and various readings.—BOSWELL. [The meaning of this sentence, and particularly of the word *excepting*, is not very clear. Perhaps Mr. Boswell wrote, "they are *not* very numerous," which would be less obscure.—ED.]

1738. Part of a translation of Father Paul Sarpi's History of the Council of Trent, *acknowl.*

N. B.—As this work, after some sheets were printed, suddenly stopped, I know not whether any part of it is now to be found.

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

Life of Father Paul, *acknowl.*

1739. A complete vindication of the Licenser of the Stage from the malicious and scandalous aspersions of Mr. Brooke, author of Gustavus Vasa, *acknowl.*

Marmor Norfolciense: or an Essay on an ancient prophetical inscription in monkish rhyme, lately discovered near Lynne in Norfolk, by PROBUS BRITANNICUS, *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Life of Boerhaave, *acknowl.*

Address to the Reader, *intern. evid.*

Appeal to the Publick in behalf of the Editor, *intern. evid.*

Considerations on the case of Dr. Trapp's Sermons; a plausible attempt to prove that an author's work may be abridged without injuring his property, *acknowl.*

[1] * Address to the Reader in May.

1740. FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

Life of Admiral Drake, *acknowl.*

Life of Admiral Blake, *acknowl.*

Life of Philip Barretier, *acknowl.*

Essay on Epitaphs, *acknowl.*

1741. FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

A free translation of the Jests of Hierocles, with an introduction, *intern. evid.*

Debate on the *Humble Petition and Advice* of the Rump Parliament to Cromwell, in 1657, to assume the title of King; abridged, methodized, and digested, *intern. evid.*

Translation of Abbé Guyon's Dissertation on the Amazons, *intern. evid.*

Translation of Fontenelle's Panegyrick on Dr. Morin, *intern. evid.*

[1] [These and several other articles, which are marked with an asterisk, were suggested to Mr. Malone by Mr. Chalmers as probably written by Dr. Johnson; they are therefore placed in this general list.—ED.]

1742. FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

Essay on the Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough, *acknowl.*

An Account of the Life of Peter Burman, *acknowl.*

The Life of Sydenham, afterwards prefixed to Dr. Swan's edition of his works, *acknowl.*

Proposals for printing Bibliotheca Harleiana, or a Catalogue of the Library of the Earl of Oxford, afterwards prefixed to the first volume of that catalogue, in which the Latin accounts of the books were written by him, *acknowl.*

Abridgment, entitled Foreign History, *intern. evid.*

Essay on the Description of China from the French of Du Halde, *intern. evid.*

1743. Dedication to Dr. Mead of Dr. James's Medicinal Dictionary, *intern. evid.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

Parliamentary Debates under the name of Debates in the Senate of Lilliput from Nov. 19, 1740, to Feb. 23, 1742-3, inclusive, *acknowl.*

Considerations on the Dispute between Crousaz and Warburton on Pope's Essay on Man, *intern. evid.*

A Letter, announcing that the Life of Mr. Savage was speedily to be published by a person who was favoured with his confidence, *intern. evid.*

Advertisement for Osborne concerning the Harleian Catalogue, *intern. evid.*

1744. Life of Richard Savage, *acknowl.*

Preface to the Harleian Miscellany, *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Preface, *intern. evid.*

1745. Miscellaneous Observations on the tragedy of Macbeth, with remarks on Sir T. H.'s (Sir Thomas Hanmer's) Edition of Shakspeare, and proposals for a new Edition of that Poet, *acknowl.*

1747. Plan for a Dictionary of the ENGLISH LANGUAGE, addressed to Philip Dormer, Earl of Chesterfield, *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

* Lauder's Proposals for printing the *Adamus Exul* of Grotius.

[Abridgment of Foreign History, *Gent. Mag.* 1794, p. 1001.]

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

1748. Life of Roscommon, *acknowl.*
Foreign History, November, *intern. evid.*

FOR MR. DODSLEY'S PRECEPTOR.

Preface, *acknowl.*
Vision of Theodore the Hermit, *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

1749. *Letter on Fire Works.

1750. The RAMBLER, the first paper of which was published 20th of March this year, and the last 17th of March, 1752, the day on which Mrs. Johnson died [1], *acknowl.*
Letter in the General Advertiser to excite the attention of the publick to the performance of Comus, which was next day to be acted at Drury-lane playhouse for the benefit of Milton's grand-daughter, *acknowl.*
Preface and Postscript to Lauder's Pamphlet, entitled "An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns in his Paradise Lost," *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

Address to the Publick concerning Miss Williams's Miscellanies.

1751. Life of Cheynel, in the Miscellany called "The Student," *acknowl.*
Letter for Lauder, addressed to the Reverend Dr. John Douglas, acknowledging his fraud concerning Milton in terms of suitable contrition, *acknowl.*
Dedication to the Earl of Middlesex of Mrs. Charlotte Lennox's "Female Quixote," *intern. evid.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

*Preface.
*Criticism on Moore's Gil Blas.

1753. Dedication to John, Earl of Orrery, of Shakspeare illustrated, by Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, *acknowl.*
During this and the following year he wrote and gave to his much loved friend, Dr. Bathurst, the papers in the Adventurer, signed T., *acknowl.*

[1] This is a mistake. The last number of the Rambler appeared on the 14th of March, three days before Mrs. Johnson died. See vol. i. p. 195.—MALONE.

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

* Preface.

* Notice of Mr. Edward Cave's death, inserted in the last page of the index.

1754. Life of Edward Cave, in the Gentleman's Magazine, *acknowl.*

FOR THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

* Preface.

1755. A DICTIONARY, with a Grammar and History, of the ENGLISH LANGUAGE, *acknowl.*

An Account of an Attempt to ascertain the Longitude at Sea, by an exact Theory of the Variations of the Magnetical Needle, with a Table of the Variations at the most remarkable cities in Europe, from the year 1660 to 1780, *acknowl.* This he wrote for Mr. Zachariah Williams, an ingenious ancient Welsh gentleman, father of Mrs. Anna Williams, whom he for many years kindly lodged in his house. It was published with a translation into Italian by Signor Baretti. In a copy of it, which he presented to the Bodleian Library at Oxford, is pasted a character of the late Mr. Zachariah Williams, plainly written by Johnson, *intern. evid.*

1756. An Abridgment of his Dictionary, *acknowl.*

Several Essays in the Universal Visiter, which there is some difficulty in ascertaining. All that are marked with two asterisks have been ascribed to him, although I am confident, from internal evidence, that we should except from these "The Life of Chaucer," "Reflections on the State of Portugal," and "An Essay on Architecture." And from the same evidence I am confident that he wrote "Further Thoughts on Agriculture" and "A Dissertation on the State of Literature and Authours." The Dissertation on the Epitaphs, written by Pope, he afterwards acknowledged, and added to his "Idler."

Life of Sir Thomas Browne, prefixed to a new edition of his Christian Morals, *acknowl.*

In the LITERARY MAGAZINE, or UNIVERSAL REVIEW, which began in January, 1756.

His ORIGINAL ESSAYS are,

The Preliminary Address, *intern. evid.*

An Introduction to the Political State of Great Britain, *intern. evid.*

Remarks on the Militia Bill, *intern. evid.*

Observations on his Britannick Majesty's Treaties with the

Empress of Russia and the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, *intern. evid.*

Observations on the Present State of Affairs, *intern. evid.*

Memoirs of Frederick III., King of Prussia, *intern. evid.*

In the same MAGAZINE his REVIEWS are of the following books: "Birch's History of the Royal Society;" "Browne's Christian Morals;" "Warton's Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope," vol. i.; "Hampton's Translation of Polybius;" "Sir Isaac Newton's Arguments in proof of a Deity;" "Borlase's History of the Isles of Scilly;" "Home's Experiments on Bleaching;" "Browne's History of Jamaica;" "Hales on Distilling Sea-Waters, Ventilators in Ships, and curing an ill taste in Milk;" "Lucas's Essay on Waters;" "Keith's Catalogue of the Scottish Bishops;" "Philosophical Transactions," vol. xlix.; "Miscellanies by Elizabeth Harrison;" "Evans's Map and Account of the Middle Colonies in America;" "The Cadet, a Military Treatise;" "The Conduct of the Ministry relating to the present War, impartially examined," *intern. evid.*

"Mrs. Lennox's Translation of Sully's Memoirs;" "Letter on the Case of Admiral Byng;" "Appeal to the People, concerning Admiral Byng;" "Hanway's Eight Days' Journey and Essay on Tea;" "Some further particulars in Relation to the Case of Admiral Byng, by a Gentleman of Oxford," *acknowl.*

Mr. Jonas Hanway having written an angry Answer to the Review of his Essay on Tea, Johnson, in the same collection, made a reply to it, *acknowl.* This is the only instance, it is believed, when he condescended to take notice of any thing that had been written against him; and here his chief intention seems to have been to make sport.

Dedication to the Earl of Rochford of, and Preface to, Mr. Payne's Introduction to the Game of Draughts, *acknowl.*

Introduction to the London Chronicle, an Evening Paper, which still subsists with deserved credit, *acknowl.*

"Observations on the Foregoing Letter," i. e. A Letter on the American Colonies.

1757. Speech on the Subject of an Address to the Throne after the Expedition to Rochefort; delivered by one of his friends in some publick meeting: it is printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for October, 1785, *intern. evid.*

The first two paragraphs of the Preface to Sir William Chambers's Designs of Chinese Buildings, &c. *acknowl.*

1758. THE IDLER, which began April 5, in this year, and was continued till April 5, 1760, *acknowl.*

An Essay on the Bravery of the English Common Soldiers was added to it, when published in volumes, *acknowl.*

1759. Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia, a Tale, *acknowl.*

Advertisement for the Proprietors of the Idler against certain persons who pirated those papers as they came out singly in a newspaper called the Universal Chronicle, or Weekly Gazette, *intern. evid.*

For Mrs. Charlotte Lennox's English Version of Brumoy, "A Dissertation on the Greek Comedy," and the General Conclusion of the Book, *intern. evid.*

Introduction to the World Displayed, a Collection of Voyages and Travels, *acknowl.*

Three Letters in the Gazetteer, concerning the best plan for Blackfriars-bridge, *acknowl.*

1760. Address of the Painters to George III. on his Accession to the throne, *intern. evid.*

Dedication of Baretti's Italian and English Dictionary to the Marquis of Abreu, then Envoy-Extraordinary from Spain at the Court of Great Britain, *intern. evid.*

Review in the Gentleman's Magazine of Mr. Tytler's acute and able Vindication of Mary, Queen of Scots, *acknowl.*

Introduction to the Proceedings of the Committee for Clothing the French Prisoners, *acknowl.*

1761. Preface to Rolt's Dictionary of Trade and Commerce, *acknowl.*

Corrections and Improvements for Mr. Gwyn the Architect's pamphlet, entitled "Thoughts on the Coronation of George III." *acknowl.*

1762. Dedication to the King of the Reverend Dr. Kennedy's Complete System of Astronomical Chronology unfolding the Scriptures, 4to edition, *acknowl.*

Preface to the Catalogue of the Artist's Exhibition, *intern. evid.*

1763. Character of Collins in the Poetical Calendar, published by Fawkes and Woty, *acknowl.*

Dedication to the Earl of Shaftesbury of the edition of Roger Ascham's English Works, published by the Reverend Mr. Bennett, *acknowl.*

The Life of Ascham, also prefixed to that edition, *acknowl.*

Review of Telemachus, a Masque, by the Reverend George Graham, of Eton College, in the Critical Review, *acknowl.*

Dedication to the Queen of Mr. Hoole's Translation of Tasso, *acknowl.*

Account of the Detection of the Imposture of the Cock-lane

Ghost, published in the Newspapers and Gentleman's Magazine, *acknowl.*

1764. Part of a Review of Granger's "Sugar Cane," a Poem, in the London Chronicle, *acknowl.*

Review of Goldsmith's "Traveller," a Poem, in the Critical Review, *acknowl.*

1765. The Plays of William Shakspeare, in eight volumes, 8vo. with Notes, *acknowl.*

1766. The Fountains, a Fairy Tale, in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, *acknowl.*

1767. Dedication to the King of Mr. Adams's Treatise on the Globes, *acknowl.*

1769. Character of the Reverend Mr. Zachariah Mudge, in the London Chronicle, *acknowl.*

1770. The False Alarm, *acknowl.*

1771. Thoughts on the late Transactions respecting Falkland's Islands, *acknowl.*

1772. Defence of a Schoolmaster; dictated to me for the House of Lords, *acknowl.*

Argument in support of the Law of *Vicious Intromission*; dictated to me for the Court of Session in Scotland, *acknowl.*

1773. Preface to Macbean's "Dictionary of Ancient Geography," *acknowl.*

Argument in favour of the Rights of Lay Patrons; dictated to me for the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, *acknowl.*

1774. The Patriot, *acknowl.*

1775. A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, *acknowl.*

Proposals for publishing the Works of Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, in 3 volumes, 4to. *acknowl.*

Preface to Baretti's Easy Lessons in Italian and English, *intern. evid.*

Taxation no Tyranny: an Answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress, *acknowl.*

Argument on the Case of Dr. Memis; dictated to me for the Court of Sessions in Scotland, *acknowl.*

Argument to prove that the Corporation of Stirling was corrupt; dictated to me for the House of Lords, *acknowl.*

1776. Argument in support of the Right of immediate and personal Reprehension from the Pulpit; dictated to me, *acknowl.*

Proposals for publishing an Analysis for the Scotch Celtick Language, by the Reverend William Shaw, *acknowl.*

1777. Dedication to the King of the Posthumous Works of Dr. Pearce, Bishop of Rochester, *acknowl.*

Additions to the Life and Character of that Prelate, prefixed to those works, *acknowl.*

Various Papers and Letters in favour of the Reverend Dr. Dodd, *acknowl.*

1780. Advertisement for his Friend, Mr. Thrale, to the Worthy Electors of the Borough of Southwark, *acknowl.*

First Paragraph of Mr. Thomas Davies's Life of Garrick, *acknowl.*

1781. Prefaces, biographical and critical, to the Works of the most eminent English Poets; afterwards published with the Title of the Lives of the English Poets, *acknowl.*

Argument on the importance of the Registration of Deeds; dictated to me for an Election Committee of the House of Commons, *acknowl.*

On the Distinction between TORY and WHIG; dictated to me, *acknowl.*

On Vicarious Punishments, and the great Propitiation for the Sins of the World by JESUS CHRIST; dictated to me, *acknowl.*

Argument in favour of Joseph Knight, an African Negro, who claimed his Liberty in the Court of Session in Scotland, and obtained it; dictated to me, *acknowl.*

Defence of Mr. Robertson, Printer of the Caledonian Mercury, against the Society of Procurators in Edinburgh, for having inserted in his paper a ludicrous paragraph against them; demonstrating that it was not an injurious Libel; dictated to me, *acknowl.*

1782. The greatest [part], if not the whole, of a Reply, by the Reverend Mr. Shaw, to a person at Edinburgh, of the name of Clarke, refuting his arguments for the authenticity of the Poems published by Mr. James Macpherson as Translations from Ossian, *intern. evid.*

1784. List of the Authors of the Universal History, deposited in the British Museum, and printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for December, this year, *acknowl.*

VARIOUS YEARS.

Letters to Mrs. Thrale, *acknowl.*

Prayers and Meditations, which he delivered to the Rev. Mr. Strahan, enjoining him to publish them, *acknowl.*

Sermons, *left for publication* by John Taylor, LL.D. Prebendary of Westminster, and given to the World by the Reverend Samuel Hayes, A.M. *intern. evid.*

Such was the number and variety of the prose works of this extraordinary man, which I have been able to discover, and *am at liberty to mention*[1]; but we ought to keep in mind, that there must undoubtedly have been many more which are yet concealed; and we may add to the account, the numerous letters which he wrote, of which a considerable part are yet unpublished. It is hoped that those persons, in whose possession they are, will favour the world with them.

JAMES BOSWELL.

[1] [This is a strange phrase. What work could it have been that Mr. Boswell was not *at liberty to mention*? That there was some peculiar meaning here can hardly be doubted. It *perhaps* may allude to some publications of a jacobite tendency, written in Johnson's earlier days, and which may have been acknowledged in confidence to Boswell; but this is a mere conjecture. Many of the articles inserted in the foregoing list *on internal evidence* (particularly those from the magazines) are of very little importance, and of very doubtful authenticity.—ED.]

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[1712] taken to London to be touched by Queen Anne for the evil, i. 16.
[1716] goes to school at Lichfield, i. 17.
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[1726] removed to the school of Stourbridge, i. 25.
[1727] leaves Stourbridge and passes two years with his father, i. 27.
[1728] enters at Pembroke College, Oxford, i. 29.
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[1731] quits college, i. 47.
[1732] becomes usher of Market-Bosworth school, i. 52.
[1733] removes to Birmingham, i. 54.
— translates Lobo's voyage to Abyssinia, i. 55.
[1734] returns to Lichfield, i. 58.
— proposes to print the Latin poems of Politian, i. 58.
— offers to write for the Gentleman's Magazine, i. 59.
[1736] marries Mrs. Porter, nearly double his own age, i. 64.
— opens a private academy at Edial, i. 66.
[1737] goes to London with Garrick, i. 72.
— retires to lodgings at Greenwich, i. 76.
— projects a translation of the 'History of the Council of Trent,' i. 76.
— returns to Lichfield and finishes his tragedy of 'Irene,' i. 76.
— removes to London with his wife, i. 80.
[1738] becomes a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine, i. 83.
— writes the debates in both houses of parliament, under the name of 'The Senate of Lilliput,' i. 87.
— publishes his 'London,' for which he receives ten guineas, i. 89.
— endeavours without success to obtain the degree of Master of Arts, i. 101.
[1739] publishes 'Marmor Norfolciense,' i. 112.
[1740] writes the Lives of Blake, Drake, and Barretier, i. 119.
[1741] writes translation of the 'Jests of Hierocles,' of Guyon's 'Dissertation on the Amazons,' and of Fontenelle's 'Panegyric on Dr. Morin,' i. 120.
[1742] writes 'Essay on the Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough,' Life of Burman and of Sydenham, and 'Proposals for printing Bibliotheca Harleiana,' i. 129.
[1743] writes 'Considerations on the Dispute between Crousaz and Warburton,' &c. and Dedication to Dr. Mead of James's 'Medicinal Dictionary,' i. 132.
[1744] publishes the 'Life of Richard Savage,' and writes 'Preface to the Harleian Miscellany,' i. 137, 151.
[1745] publishes 'Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth, with Remarks on Hanmer's Shakspeare,' i. 151.
[1747] publishes the plan, or prospectus, of his Dictionary of the English Language, i. 156.
— forms the King's Head Club in Ivy-lane, i. 163.
[1748] visits Tunbridge Wells, i. 165.
— writes 'Life of Roscommon,' 'Preface to Dodsley's Preceptor,' and 'Vision of Theodore the Hermit,' i. 166.
[1749] publishes 'The Vanity of Human Wishes,' for which he receives fifteen guineas, i. 166.
— his 'Irene' acted at Drury-lane Theatre, i. 171.
[1750] begins to publish 'The Rambler,' his prayer on commencing the undertaking, i. 156; writes a prologue for the benefit of Milton's grandaughter, i. 204.
[1751] writes 'Life of Cheynel,' Letter for Lauder, and Dedication to Mrs. Charlotte Lenox's 'Female Quixote,' i. 205.
[1752] occupied with his Dictionary, and with the Rambler, i. 210.
— death of his wife, i. 212; his affecting prayer on the occasion, 213; his extreme grief for her loss, *ibid.*; composes her funeral sermon and her epitaph, 219.
— circle of his friends at this time, i. 227.
[1753] writes the papers in the 'Adventurer' signed T., i. 211, 237.
— begins the second volume of his Dictionary, i. 242.
[1754] writes the Life of Cave, i. 243.
— makes an excursion to Oxford, i. 256.

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[1754] obtains the degree of Master of Arts from that University, i. 262.
[1755] publishes his Dictionary, i. 264.
— projects the scheme of a 'Bibliothèque,' i. 270.
— his depressed state of mind at this period, i. 282.
— the Academy della Crusca present him with their 'Vocabulario,' and the French Academy send him their 'Dictionnaire,' i. 283.
— projects a scheme of life for Sunday, i. 286.
[1756] publishes an abridgment of his Dictionary, i. 291.
— writes essays in the 'Universal Visiter,' i. 291.
— superintends, and largely contributes to, the Literary Magazine, i. 292.
— composes pulpit discourses for sundry clergymen, i. 307.
— issues proposals for an edition of Shakspeare, i. 308.
— is offered a living, but declines entering into holy orders, i. 310.
[1757] dictates a speech on the subject of an address to the throne after the expedition to Rochfort, i. 311.
[1758] commences the 'Idler,' i. 317.
— being compelled to retrench his expenses, he breaks up housekeeping, and removes to chambers in the Temple, i. 320.
[1759] loses his mother, i. 324.
— writes his 'Rasselas' to defray the expenses of her funeral and to pay some debts, i. 330.
— makes an excursion to Oxford, i. 337.
— writes a 'Dissertation on the Greek Comedy,' the Introduction to the 'World Displayed,' and 'Three Letters concerning the best Plan for Blackfriars Bridge,' i. 340.
[1760] writes 'Address of the Painters to George III. on his Accession,' the Dedication to Baretti's Italian Dictionary, and a review of Tytler's Vindication of Mary, Queen of Scots, i. 342.
— forms rules and resolutions for the guidance of his moral conduct and literary studies, i. 343.
[1761] writes Preface to 'Rolt's' Dictionary of Trade and Commerce, i. 348.
[1762] writes Dedication to the king of 'Kennedy's Astronomical Chronology,' and Preface to the Catalogue of the Artists' Exhibition, i. 356.
[1762] obtains a pension of 300*l.* a year, as the reward of his literary merit, i. 361.
— accompanies Sir Joshua Reynolds in a visit to Devonshire, i. 367.
[1763] writes Character of Collins, Life of Ascham, Dedication to Hoole's Tasso, and Detection of the Imposture of the Cock-lane Ghost, i. 372.
— Boswell becomes acquainted with him, i. 393.
[1764] the 'Literary Club' founded, i. 490.
— afflicted with a severe return of his hypochondriack disorder, i. 495.
— writes a review of Granger's 'Sugar Cane,' and of Goldsmith's 'Traveller,' i. 494.
— visits his friend, Dr. Percy, in Northamptonshire, i. 499.
[1765] visits the University of Cambridge, i. 500.
— created Doctor of Laws by Dublin University, i. 503.
— is introduced into the family of Mr. Thrale, i. 506, 512.
— gives to the world his edition of Shakspeare, i. 54.
[1766] writes the noble dedication to the king of Gwyn's 'London and Westminster improved,' and 'The Fountains,' a fairy tale, ii. 25.
[1767] his interview with the king, ii. 34.
— interesting extract from his devotional record, ii. 43.
— writes dedication to the king of 'Adam's Treatise on the Globe,' ii. 44.
[1768] writes prologue to Goldsmith's 'Good-natured Man,' ii. 47.
— visits Oxford, ii. 47.
[1769] appointed professor in ancient literature to the Royal Academy of Arts, ii. 69.
— passes the summer at Oxford, Lichfield, and Brighton, ii. 69.
— appears at the Old Bailey as a witness on the trial of Baretti for murder, ii. 98.
[1770] publishes 'The False Alarm,' ii. 114.
[1771] publishes 'Thoughts on the late Transactions respecting Falkland's Islands,' ii. 121.
— design of bringing him into parliament, ii. 124.
— engaged in preparing a fourth edition of his folio Dictionary, ii. 146.
[1772] writes 'Defence of a Schoolmaster,' and 'Argument in support of Vicious Intromission,' ii. 179.
— interesting sketches of the state of his mind at this time, ii. 184.

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[1773] publishes new edition of his folio Dictionary, i. 192.
— writes preface to 'Macbean's Dictionary of Ancient Geography,' and Argument in Favour of Lay Patrons, ii. 192.
— at sixty-four, attempts to learn the Low Dutch languages, ii. 247.
— injures his eyesight by the imprudent use of small print, ii. 247.
— his journey with Boswell to the Hebrides, ii. 250.
— presented with the freedom of Aberdeen, ii. 324.
[1774] engaged in writing his 'Journey to the Western Islands,' iii. 115.
— makes a journey into North Wales with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, iii. 124.
— spends some time with Mr. Burke at Beaconsfield, iii. 159.
— writes 'The Patriot,' iii. 162.
[1775] publishes his 'Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland,' iii. 175.
— publishes 'Taxation no Tyranny,' iii. 187.
— receives his diploma as Doctor of Laws from the University of Oxford, iii. 205.
— makes a tour to France with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, iii. 264.
[1776] writes an Argument in support of the Liberty of the Pulpit, Proposals for an Analysis of the Scotch Celtick Language, and a Defence of the Booksellers from the Charge of making exorbitant Profits, iii. 311.
— pays a visit to Oxford and Lichfield, iii. 326.
— visits Bath with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, iii. 409.
[1777] engages with the booksellers to write 'The Lives of the English Poets,' iii. 474.
— writes dedication to the king of the Posthumous Works of Dr. Pearce, iii. 476.
— visits Oxford and Derbyshire, iii. 496.
— exerts his humane and zealous interference in behalf of Dr. Dodd, iii. 503.
[1778] his visit to Warley Camp, iv. 228.
— his home made uncomfortable by the perpetual jarrings of those whom he sheltered under his roof, iv. 232.
[1779] publishes the first four volumes of his 'Prefaces, biographical and critical, to the most eminent of the English Poets,' iv. 237.
[1780] employed in the completion of the 'Lives of the Poets,' iv. 296.
[1781] completes his 'Lives of the Poets,' iv. 401.
— loses his friend Mr. Thrale, iv. 459.
— appointed one of his executors, iv. 457.
— loses his friend Mr. Strahan, iv. 474.
— plans a life of greater diligence, v. 7.
— purposes to devote six weeks to the study of Italian literature, v. 7.
— visits Oxford, Birmingham, and Lichfield, v. 7.
[1782] loses his old friend Robert Levett, v. 11.
— declining state of his health, v. 16.
— visits Oxford, v. 30.
— takes a parting adieu of Streatham; his prayer on leaving Mr. Thrale's family, v. 37.
— reads a book of the Æneid every night for twelve nights, v. 100.
[1783] attacked with a stroke of the palsy, v. 109.
— visits Lichfield and Oxford, v. 116.
— institutes the Essex Head Club, v. 144.
— seized with a spasmodic asthma, v. 146.
[1784] visits Oxford, v. 182.
— his friends project a tour to Italy for the benefit of his health, v. 234, 245, 261.
— visits Lichfield, Birmingham, and Oxford for the last time, v. 268.
— his extraordinary expiatory visit to Uttoxeter, v. 288, 288 *n.*

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— makes a liberal provision for his negro servant, Francis Barber, v. 311.
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— wrote a hundred lines of the 'Vanity of Human Wishes' in a day, ii. 15.
— wrote his 'False Alarm' in twenty-eight hours, ii. 116.
— wrote a sermon after dinner, and sent it off by the post that night, ii. 302.
— wrote forty-eight pages of the 'Life of Savage' at a sitting, ii. 302.
— wrote six sheets of translation from the French in one day, ii. 302.
— wrote 'The Patriot' in one day, iii. 164.
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